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February 1st, 2012 ■ Issue No. 20 ■ Volume 102

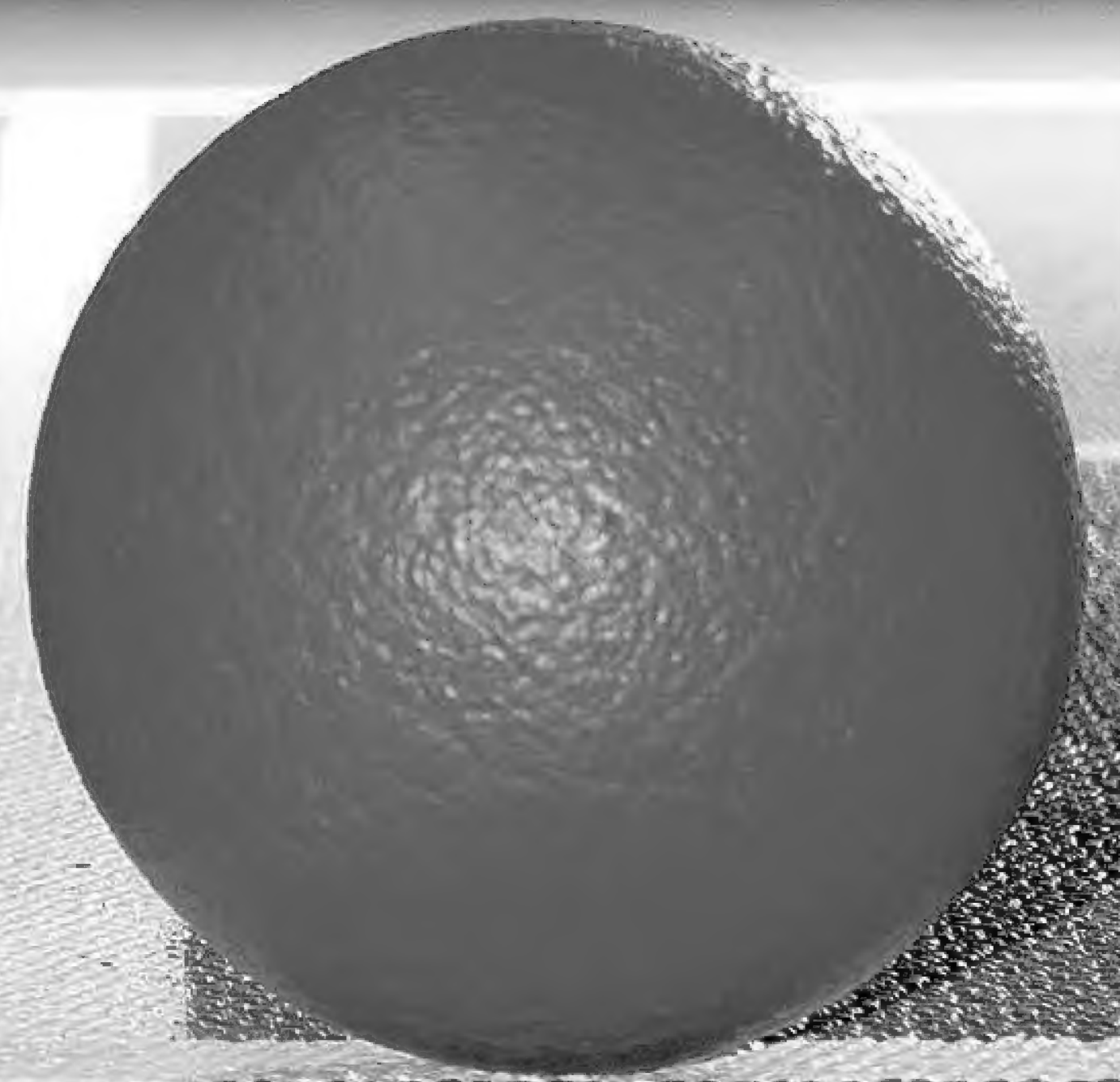
# THE gateway

THE OFFICIAL STUDENT NEWSPAPER AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

With the SU actively recruiting a team of 5,000,  
the U of A is poised to reclaim the world record  
for the largest dodgeball game...

## Chasing the Record

Organizing the campus event of the year, page 5





THE **gateway**

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**colophon**

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**U OF A GOES GLOBAL** Check out [thegatewayonline.ca](http://thegatewayonline.ca) from Jan. 30-Feb. 3 for daily coverage of various International Week events. JULIANNA DAMER, AMIRALI SHARIFI, DAN MCKECHNIE

**streeters**

COMPILED AND PHOTOGRAPHED BY Ravanne Lawday + Sam Brooks



**Emily Dao** FACULTÉ ST. JEAN I

"The Westboro Baptist Church. They suck."

**Connor Kurtz** ARTS II

"My fourth-grade French teacher. I just loathed the guy. I wish I could throw the dodgeball hard enough to smash his front teeth."



**Cole Gunderson** PHYS ED. I

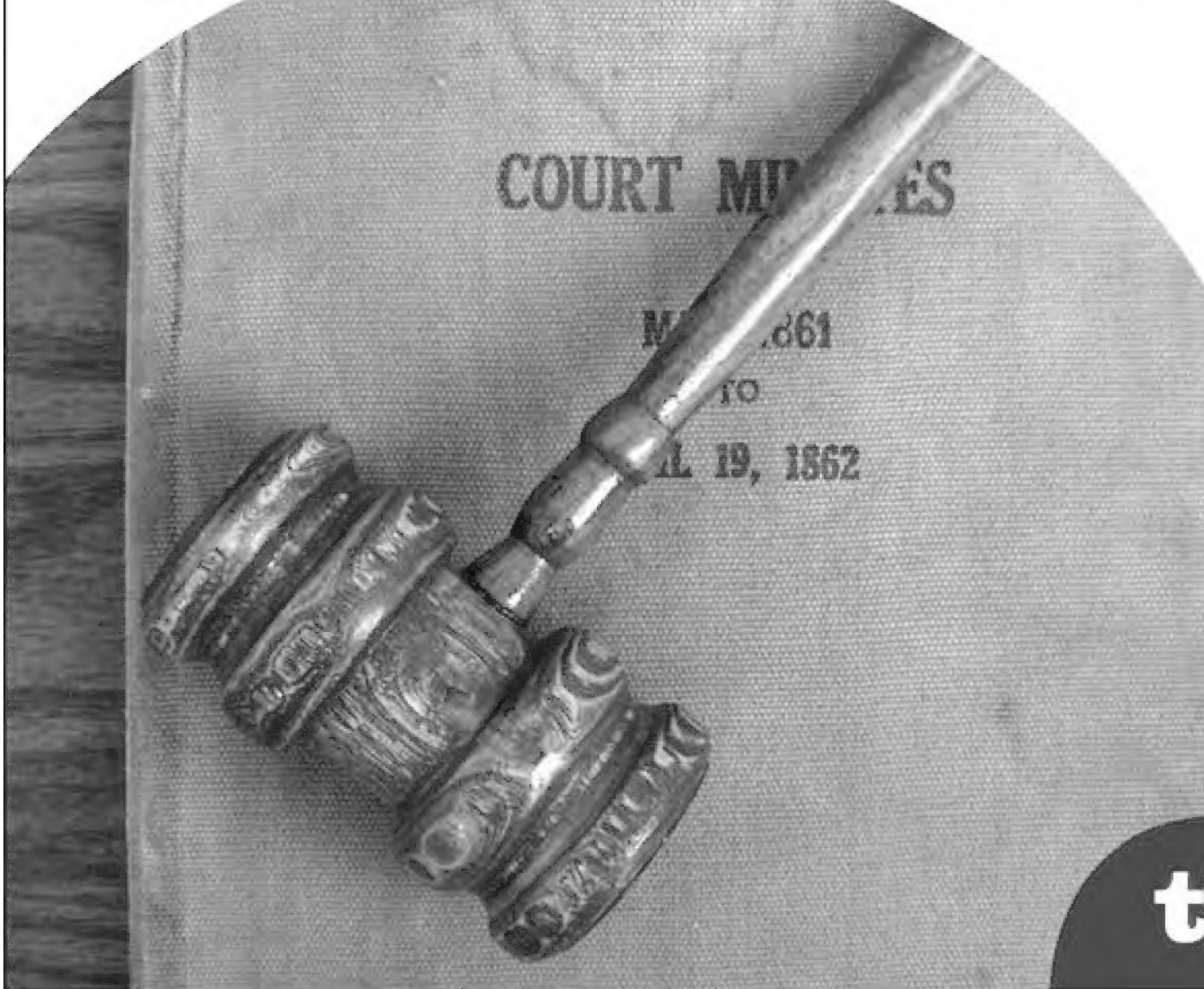
"The Calgary Flames. [Why?] Because it's cow town. The only good thing coming out of Calgary is the road to Edmonton."



**Wyatt Arnell** ARTS II

"My statistics prof. The words that come out of her mouth don't match with anything she's saying."

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SUPPLIED: ED ELLIS

## Drama student remembered as having a “huge love of life”

**April Hudson**

STAFF REPORTER • @APRIL\_HUDSON

Hundreds gathered Thursday morning in Lister Conference Centre for a memorial service commemorating Tristan (Tian) Mi, a University of Alberta drama student who passed away unexpectedly on Jan. 19.

Mi came to the University of Alberta from China in 2008 in order to enrol in the drama department's BFA Acting program. He was in his fourth and last year, and was set to graduate after completing this semester.

During the memorial service, Mi's family was presented with certificates of attendance as a tangible memento of the time Mi spent at the University of Alberta.

"It is our hope that these certificates will be an ongoing symbol of the contributions that Tristan made to our community," said Dean of Students Frank Robinson during the service.

The university has also awarded Mi a posthumous degree in honour of Mi's hard work and talent. At the memorial, Mi's father announced that he would be flying back to Edmonton from China in June in order to receive the degree on behalf of his son.

"(The degree) was particularly important to Tristan — it meant a lot to him," said Julie Brown, acting chair (administration) for the drama department.

"He had huge aspirations in terms of the work that he wanted to do in the future, and to have gotten his education through our program meant a great deal to him."

According to Brown, Mi had at one point made himself a mock degree in order to keep inspiring himself to do the hard work required in the BFA Acting program.

"There was a pretty good chance he was going to be going back to China and becoming a big star," Brown said. "He felt very honoured to be a part of this program."

Mi's family also announced at the memorial that they would be establishing a drama scholarship at the U of A in honour of Mi.

The scholarship will be called the Tristan Mi Tian Memorial Scholarship, said Brown, and will be gifted at \$500 per year to one BFA acting student going into their final year of study.

Part of a close-knit group of 12 drama students performing in the university's Studio Theatre's Season 2011-12 productions, Mi played his first role last November in

David Greig's *Yellow Moon*. He was also rehearsing for a leading role in Shakespeare's *Cymbeline* at the time of his death.

"He was a born performer," said Jan Selman, a drama professor who taught Mi and directed him in *Yellow Moon*. "What he was doing with us was learning the deeper things about the process of acting, as well as acting in English."

The University of Alberta's drama program auditions country-wide, and is an extremely competitive program to get into.

"That was extremely challenging (for him) because he's from China, and it (wasn't) just a matter of language, it's the whole culture," Selman said.

"I'm really so grateful that he had an opportunity to perform on the stage, because he worked so hard through the program, and he loved the performance part of it, so he got on the main stage and he really thrived in that setting."

Selman added that Mi's family, classmates, as well as everyone who worked with him, are fully committed to remembering his life and "doing it honour."

"He had a huge love of life," Selman said. "He was an absolute delight to work with."

## SU argues against BoG proposal to deregulate non-instructional fees

**April Hudson**

STAFF REPORTER • @APRIL\_HUDSON

Recent motions on the part of the University of Alberta's Board of Governors have provoked a move by the Students' Union to push for provincial regulation of mandatory non-instructional fees.

Although the SU has been in talks with the Ministry of Advanced Education and Technology for three years regarding non-instructional fees, they were told by Minister Greg Weadick to work out a solution with the U of A — a conversation that's hit a standstill.

"We've had a long discussion and have hit a point of fundamental disagreement, where the Students' Union believes these fees need to go to student approval mechanism, and the institution believes that they don't," said SU President Rory Tighe.

"The latest (development) is worse than just not allowing student approval — it's actually deregulating these fees even more from an institutional perspective."

The Board of Governors currently follows a policy that any time an increase to a non-instructional fee is proposed that is above inflation, student referendum or students' council approval must be sought.

"Administration is actually moving to take away that motion later this semester," Tighe said. "So my

proposal is to not only keep that motion in place, but also extend it (so that) the creation of new fees must get that approval."

Most non-instructional fees, such as the U-Pass and the Student Services Fee, generally provide funds for non-instructional items that add value to students' university experience.

"We believe that all non-instructional fees should be dealt with through that process, to make sure that students actually want it," Tighe said. "Non-instructional fees should not be core to the institution, but should again be something that is added value."

However, if the Board of Governors passes the motion to deregulate non-instructional fees, the SU is concerned that fees like the controversial Common Student Space, Sustainability, and Services (CoSSS) fee may become a method used by the university to make up for caps on tuition increases.

"I can't imagine the minister being okay with deregulating the fees even more from an institutional perspective," Tighe said. "The ministry should regulate these fees from a provincial stance."

Weadick said there have been plenty of non-instructional fees that students have paid, but over the past couple years, some particularly troubling ones have popped up.

"(Some institutions) have put in some non-instructional fees that appear to me to not reflect a real service, but are imposed to bypass the tuition caps," Weadick said. "We at the ministry do not support those, we do not believe that is an appropriate action, and that's why we've moved forward here to look at some options on how we can deal with them and what kind of policies might work in the future for those types of fees."

When approached with the issue of non-instructional fees, Weadick asked all the universities, colleges, and technical institutes in Alberta to come back to him in a month, after meeting and conferring with students, with policy recommendations to deal with the fees.

"The students have said it's probably their most important issue to deal with," Weadick said. "They want to make sure that education remains acceptable and affordable, and so do we."

As of right now, there is no provincial legislation concerning non-instructional fees. Regulations are held at a university level, allowing institutions the ability to implement new fees as they see fit.

Representatives from the Board of Governors declined to provide comment, as the move to further deregulate non-instructional fees will not be decided until the Feb. 10 meeting.


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# U of A libraries recognized for digitization initiatives

Jonathan Faerber  
NEWS WRITER

Less searching, more finding — an apt mantra of modern librarians that describes how Geoff Harder, the University of Alberta's digital initiatives co-ordinator, envisions his mandate.

Harder's efforts, among others, are moving the University of Alberta's libraries into the spotlight, most recently for their part in winning a Digging into Data Challenge grant, which aims to address how "big data" changes have altered the research landscape for the humanities and social sciences.

The Virginia Tech and University of Toronto grant awardees approached the U of A libraries last year with the hopes of using the Peel's Prairie Provinces digitized newspaper collections to trace the spread of information and disease during the 1918 influenza pandemic. The U.S. Library of Congress was also asked to be involved in the initiative.

"This Digging into Data partnership proves that we are moving in the right direction and that the university is truly making its mark in the world as having a library with collections that are worth sharing," Harder said.

It's not the first time the University of Alberta libraries have been involved in such a high-profile initiative either.

A few years ago, Google requested to add the Peel's Prairie Provinces catalogue of more than 67,000 newspapers into their own newspaper index.

Harder said the latest request reflects the high quality of the U of A's e-collection of over 4 million digitized articles — the result of digitization standards aimed at maximizing the readability of their e-collections through converting, segmenting, analyzing, and tagging

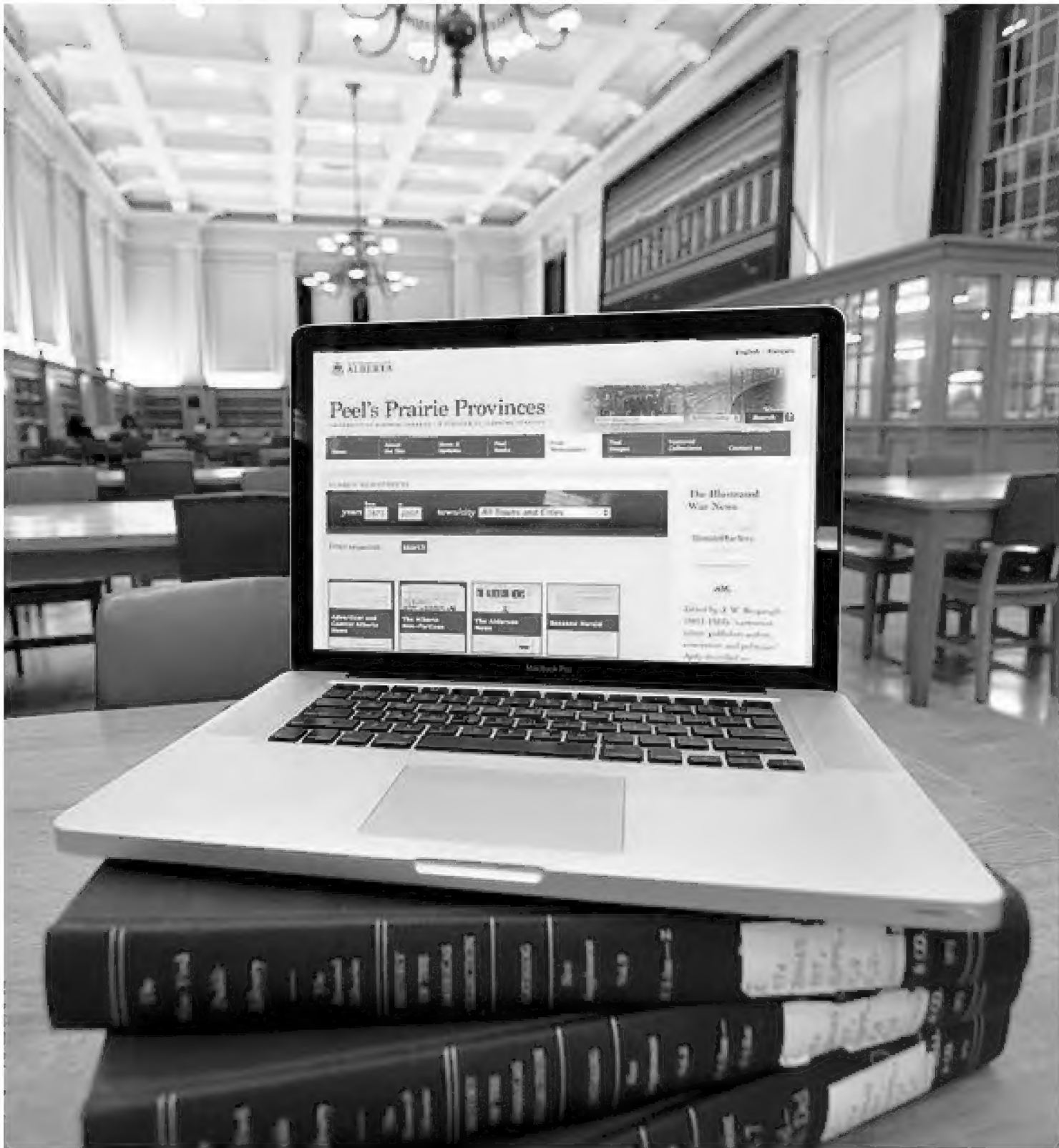


PHOTO ILLUSTRATION: YIFENG LIU

existing hard-copy data.

However, the study is only a small part of the ongoing research and continued digitization at the U of A libraries, with similar granting projects now in the works.

One of these projects aims at literally changing the face of scholarship, with innovative layering techniques that combine different genres of digitized data, such as maps, directories and photographs with computational tools.

It's a possibility that Acting Chief Librarian Mary-Jo Romaniuk terms "the e-book on steroids."

Despite the latest technological advances, digitization is unending and far from easy. According to Romaniuk, the U of A libraries will need at least 10 years to convert the current data in their digitization cue.

All this, however, goes into making material more available and user friendly.

"Research data needs to go somewhere, and if it comes from a granting school, it should be publicly available for re-use by others," Romaniuk explained.

"It needs to be stored and accessible, and in this cool digital world, things need to be interoperable."

Harder added that digitization is key to supporting scholarship on a very large scale.

"The more we digitize, the more we hear demands from researchers, genealogists, students and the general public, to convert more historical material," Harder said.

"The premise behind much of this digitization, software development, and linking of data is to remove as many barriers as possible."

## CAMPUS PROFILE

# U of A linguistics professor living in Germany wins prestigious award

Alana Willerton  
NEWS STAFF • @ALANAWILLERTON

Despite having moved across the Atlantic, a former University of Alberta linguistics professor is maintaining his connections to the campus after having received one of the most prestigious research awards in Germany.

Harald Baayen won the \$6.5 million Alexander von Humboldt professorship last year and has finally managed to settle into his new life at the University of Tuebingen in Germany.

One of the most prestigious research awards in the country, the professorship runs for five years and will provide Baayen with the opportunity to continue his work in quantitative linguistics, focusing specifically on how the brain handles language.

So far, Baayen has begun the process of building up a new lab at the German university, and has brought two students from the U of A to Tuebingen to work with him.

He plans to hire post-doctoral fellows and doctoral students soon as well. As for the \$6.5 million, Baayen intends to put the funds towards funding lab equipment, acquiring

resources for running experiments and even for researchers' salaries.

"The research funding that comes with an Alexander von Humboldt professorship, in my case five million Euro, is a once-in-a-lifetime event that makes it possible to pursue one's research interests much faster than would otherwise be the case," Baayen said.

"I had not expected to receive such a prestigious award, and it has taken me back to Europe even though my wife and I had come to Edmonton to stay."

It was back in 2007 that Baayen and his wife first moved to the University of Alberta from the Netherlands, having made several regular visits to the U of A's linguistics department and its Center for Comparative Psycholinguistics (CCP) before that.

It was then that Baayen began to make the connections with staff and students that he maintains to this day, despite living halfway around the world.

Thanks to the use of video conferencing systems within the CCP lab, Baayen has been able to host joint lab meetings from Tuebingen with the U of A, allowing them to share presentations with not only each

other, but also researchers and students from other universities.

"Advances in communication technologies make it much easier to actually keep doing collaborative work," Baayen said.

"What is really great is that the provost is also financially supporting the collaboration between the CCP and my new lab in Tuebingen."

This collaboration between the two universities has led to them currently working together on ideas involving exchange studentships and joint PhD degrees.

Baayen suspects that some of his current students may well be among those to receive a joint PhD from both universities in the near future.

While Baayen has no plans to immediately return to the U of A following his professorship, he nevertheless plans to keep up his communications with the U of A, all the while continuing his research in Germany.

"One never knows what will happen in the long run," Baayen said. "But for now, my plan is to maintain strong collaborative links with the U of A, even after the five years of my current funding have whizzed by."



# U of A hopes to conquer dodgeball world record



DODGEBALL DEVOTEE Colten Yamagishi is spearheading the dodgeball record. MATT HIRJI

**Matt Hirji**  
NEWS STAFF • @MATTHIRJI

What does it take to break the world record for the biggest dodgeball game?

Try 5,000 participants, 1,250 dodgeballs, 150 referees, and one determined university. It may be a tall order, but for Students' Union Vice-President (Student Life) Colten Yamagishi, that's what it will take if the University of Alberta wants to re-gain its spot in the record books.

"Of course I'm excited, but I'm kind of nervous about it at the same time too," Yamagishi said.

"I guess a weird thing to relate it to would be those battles that they had during the world wars. When there were tons and tons of people lined up and just going crazy. You can't picture it — you just have to be there to believe it."

The world record dodgeball event has become a U of A staple since 2009, when more than 1,198 students gathered in the Butterdome to take the record for the most amount of participants in a single dodgeball game.

Since then, a rivalry has developed between the U of A and other universities across North America. Last January, more than 2,012 people filed into the Butterdome to reclaim the record after it was broken by the University of California, Irvine, who had held it with 1,745 players.

But in September, the UC, Irvine reclaimed the record with a game that included 4,000 participants.

Trumping that record is far from a small task. Rounding up 5,000 U of A students, faculty and alumni in the Butterdome this Friday to play in a single dodgeball game may

seem like an impossible feat, but Yamagishi is optimistic that it can be accomplished.

"It takes lots of coordination and planning to figure out how it's all going to work. Even when I saw the 2,000 people last year, that was almost unimaginable," Yamagishi said.

Preliminary planning for the event started last summer and, since then, countless people have been intricately involved in the staging of Friday's dodgeball event.

amount of elbow grease to make an event of such a scale a success, it's not just about taking back the world record, in what has become an international rivalry between the U of A and the UC Irvine.

For Yamagishi, he says it's also about creating an atmosphere that gives students the opportunity to feel connected with their campus community.

"People call it a pissing contest, or whatever. But besides that, the biggest reason for having this is

**"I always describe it as the biggest student engagement event of the year. This is the event where people who don't normally participate in campus events are given the biggest opportunity to come out and really get a taste of what the student experience is all about. I think it's just going to give people shivers when they are there."**

COLTEN YAMAGISHI  
STUDENTS' UNION VICE-PRESIDENT (STUDENT LIFE)

The Students' Union, the Lister Dodgeball League, along with the Office of the Dean of Students, have spent a significant amount of time shaping how the event will run from start to finish.

And that doesn't even account for the dozens of volunteers that will give their time on Friday to register participants and hand out more than 4,000 t-shirts, among other duties.

"But it's really not that complicated of an event," Yamagishi admitted. "You put a bunch of people into one place, you make sure that their bags and stuff don't get lost, and you play dodgeball."

While it may take a significant

because it's just that many students getting together. The real value comes in with the engagement that students feel," Yamagishi said.

"I always describe it as the biggest student engagement event of the year. This is the event where people who don't normally participate in campus events are given the biggest opportunity to come out and really get a taste of what the student experience is all about. I think it's just going to give people shivers when they are there."

The Break the Record Event will take place at noon this Friday in the Butterdome. Registration will open at 10 a.m.

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# A global outlook on campus with International Week

**Katelyn Hoffart**

NEWS WRITER

Lively performances, thought-provoking presentations and interactive workshops are all in store for this year's International Week, entitled "Living Democracy: Citizen Power in a Global Age."

The annual University of Alberta event encourages students to broaden their perspectives and examine critical issues past their own locality.

This year's events will delve into current issues relating to human development, poverty and sustainable economic development, according to Rodrigo Loyola, global education program lead for U of A International and event organizer.

"Basically, what we are trying to tap into is understanding," Loyola said.

"We're trying to provide a space where people can have a dialogue on these issues so that they can begin to better understand not only the challenges that we are facing as citizens in our own country, but also as all citizens facing issues everywhere."

More than 60 free events, including workshops, presentations, exhibits and film screenings, will make up this year's I-Week.

Leslie Weigl, performance coordinator for I-Week, is hoping to engage students with internationally-themed dance workshops and concerts.

The Good People concert on Friday will feature local and global artists, along with performances given by students living in the U of A's International House. Additionally, the Global Rhythm activities on the SUB



**INTERNATIONAL FLAVOUR** Global Rythm dances on SUB Stage are some of the many events happening during I-Week. JULIANNA DAMER

Stage will include interactive dance and music sessions with renowned Cuban choreographer Orlando Martinez.

"These are my favourite events because we're showing up in a place that's usually quiet and there's not that much going on," Weigl said.

"I really like coming to SUB and giving people an experience with something unusual happening so that we can start imagining in an alternative way."

"There's really something for everyone," she added. "We're coming from an interdisciplinary

vantagepoint, while focusing on what it means to live democracy — how we can all be active citizens to make change and create the world that we want."

Planning for I-Week began last April with a small team of permanent staff. More than 100

volunteers, such as U of A student Keanna Krawiec, help with the event as it nears its launch.

"I know there are a lot of volunteers putting in 20 to 30 hours next week," Krawiec said. "It's nice to see that a lot of other people are taking interest, like coming to pick up pamphlets and excited for the week's events."

Loyola hopes that students will continue to be aware of the issues surrounding democracy and global challenges by understanding their role in international affairs.

"Specifically, in terms of global citizenship, it's understanding how our decisions affect not only our own lives, but the lives of other people that are living a continent away."

For now, Rodrigo says one of the key aspects for each student to gain out of I-Week is to come with an open mind.

"We may have our own values and principles, and they're set very strongly by the way we've been socialized by our family, by the people we grew up with, the schools that we went to. And I think that it's sometimes hard to open yourself up to even attempt to understand the world from a different perspective," Loyola said.

"I would say that when you do, it's the most rewarding thing that you can possibly do in your life because it has a considerable impact."

International Week is running all week and will cap off on Friday at 7:30 p.m. with the Good People concert in the Myer Horowitz theatre.

Check out [thegatewayonline.ca](http://thegatewayonline.ca) all week for daily coverage on I-Week events.

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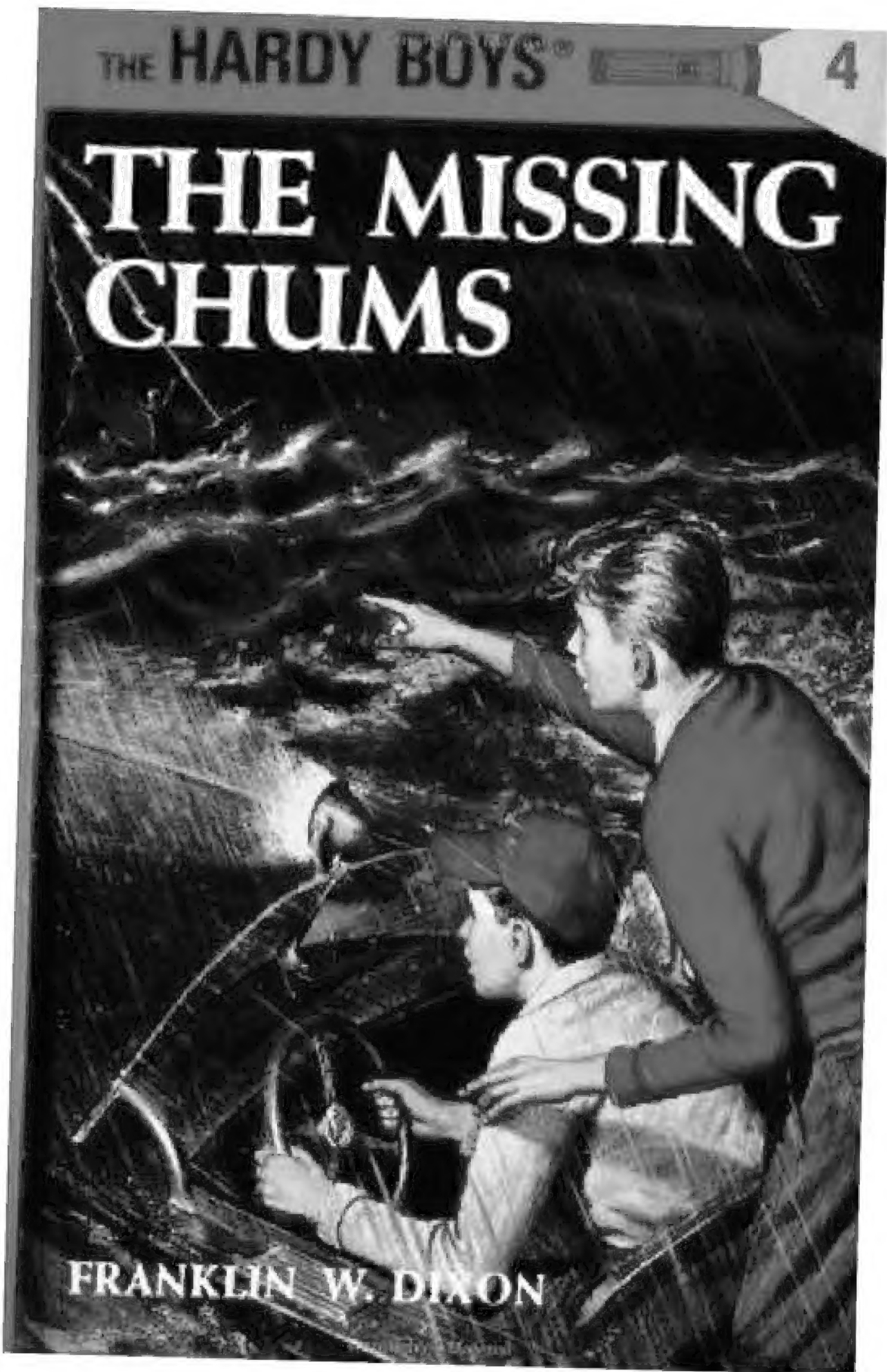
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Dearest Gateway newsie hopeful, where you have been all our lives? We know you so desperately long to write news, so why not make that trek to the third floor of SUB and fill that hole in our hearts? As our friends the Hardy Boys say, we're missing you chum.

# gateway news

Your gateway to misconstruing book titles for personal gain

NEWS MEETINGS  
FRIDAYS AT 3 PM  
IN 3-04 SUB

online at THEGATEWAYONLINE.CA/NEWS



LIAR, LIAR A U of A study shows the degree of a lie relates to the level of empathy a person has towards their friend. PHOTO ILLUSTRATION: MATT HIRJI

## Fibbing for friends ties in with being a good wingman

Andrew Jeffrey  
NEWS STAFF • @ANDREW\_JEFFREY

When you see your friend lying to impress someone else, what's your first instinct?

It might be to go along with your friend's lie in order to maintain or improve their image. But how big of a lie would you tell, and why are you even lying for them in the first place?

These questions fall under the "wingman effect," a theory developed by University of Alberta researcher Jennifer Argo along with two other UBC researchers.

Argo's team found that when a person lies to improve someone else's social status, it stems from empathy for their cohort's situation. The worse a situation is and the better you know the person, the more likely you'll lie for them.

Argo admits the idea that we lie for our friends isn't earth-shattering, but that wasn't the purpose of her study. Rather, Argo was more interested in a person's reasoning for lying.

A questionnaire given to the participants in her study showed that the degree of their lie directly correlated with their empathy towards

the person for whom they lied.

"People who are high in empathy will even lie for their friend if their friend isn't present, which I think is a very good indicator that empathy is driving it," Argo said.

"When you're low on empathy, you won't always lie for your friend, unless it's a really big price differential and they're actually present," Argo added.

"If they're absent, they're on their own, you don't care. And if it's a small price differential, you won't actually lie for them even if they're there."

Argo presented dozens of scenarios involving deception in a variety of contexts to 800-900 people. The respondents answered a series of questions on how they would react to these situations.

In the study, approximately 200 people were asked how they would react if they learned a stranger paid less for the same car their friend bought.

Argo tested whether people would lie if the price difference was either \$200 or \$2,000. The results showed that a person would likely lie for a friend no matter the cost in order to maintain their social image. But with a stranger, a person

would likely only lie if the difference were \$2,000.

Previous studies on the reason people lie for themselves inspired Argo and her colleagues to consider why people lie for others. There's less personal benefit for the liar and more potential risks that could be detrimental to the person lying.

"The biggest thing is just being marked as a liar, which has implications for later relationships," Argo said.

Argo believes her study is important in understanding a person's psyche and its effect on how willing they are to help others when there are potential risks involved in lying.

"Nobody wants to be called a liar or to perceive themselves as a liar, so there's internal personal consequences to lying," Argo said.

"The importance of it is for the relationship management and recognizing that if your friend is lying for you, they're doing it to protect your image."

"They've got your image at heart more than themselves, because it comes at a cost when you engage in deception. They're not doing it for everybody."

The study was published in the *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*.

## Space burps offer clues on new galaxies

Matt Hirji  
NEWS STAFF • @MATTHIRJI

By pinpointing the exact moment when a black hole launched fast-moving material from the region surrounding it, a University of Alberta astronomer has uncovered an important clue to how new galaxies are formed.

The interaction of material ejected, or "burped," from black holes with other gasses in space is fundamental to the creation of new galaxies, but Gregory Sivakoff's research studying how and when matter is ejected from the black hole gives insight to the origins of these processes.

"One of the greatest questions in astronomy today is how black holes affect the formation of galaxies," Sivakoff said.

"Our research may give foundational insight into this evolution by offering an understanding on the processes in which material from around a black hole is launched away."

By using ultra-sharp detection methods made possible by the Very Long Baseline Array (VLBA) telescope system, along with an x-ray timing satellite, Sivakoff was able to detect and study an outburst by a stellar black hole located 28,000 light years away from Earth.

"Essentially, if your eyes were as sharp as the VLBA is, you'd be able

to see somebody standing on the moon with your own eyes. Because of this, we were able to track how the jet's behavior was changing," Sivakoff explained.

"In our observations, we can see the emission blobs moving from the base of the black hole outwards at about the quarter the speed of light. And because those things are moving out, we can essentially play the tape backwards and precisely, to plus or minus half a day, to determine when those blobs started their journey."

■ "One of the greatest questions in astronomy today is how black holes affect the formation of galaxies."

GREGORY SIVAKOFF  
U OF A RESEARCHER

By understanding when the matter was ejected, it's also possible to extrapolate under which environments this ejection can take place.

As Sivakoff explains, before the ejection takes place, the material in the regions immediately surrounding the black hole, called the accretion disk, becomes unstable, heats up and becomes sucked into the hole. After that, there's an ejection of material from the black

hole at incredible speeds.

"This is sort of the foundational research in trying to understand how the accretion disk ... and the jet burst are linked," Sivakoff said.

"By pinpointing exactly when the jet was launched, we can tell exactly what was going on in the accretion disk and we saw that the behavior was fundamentally changing. That means that we have a great meter to understand the physics of a projectile launch."

Sivakoff's research will help the astronomical community better understand the physics of how matter in the universe interact with each other.

While the exact mechanisms of the ejection remains mysterious to the scientific community, the launches also occur in supermassive black holes — similar to one at the centre of the Milky Way — which could have a significant impact in the creation of new galaxies.

"We're not entirely sure what the material is inside the jet. It definitely includes electrons, but we don't know if there are protons or positrons mixed in there," Sivakoff said. "What we do know is that it's some sort of ionized gas. As that material impacts other gasses in the future, it may affect how stars are formed."

According to Sivakoff, more theoretical work will be done in the upcoming years in order to understand the full implications of the launch.



# Opinion

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**Volunteer**

Opinion meetings Wednesdays at 5 p.m. in 3-04 SUB. C'mon by!

EDITORIAL COMMENT

## Mexico travel fears for Canadians grossly overblown

IT'S THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT. YOU ENTER A HOTEL ELEVATOR TO find a stranger standing there. You smile, shifting a glance at the elevator numbers illuminating sequentially. The elevator finally chimes, and the doors slide open on your floor. Just before you step out, a hand blocks your path. Before you have time to react, a fist slams into your face, over and over again, until your vision is reduced to darkness from your swollen eyes. You're left for dead.

It's a nightmare that would make anyone wake up in a fit of horror. But it became a reality for 37-year-old Calgary Sheila Nabb, who was found by a hotel staff member in Mexico in the early morning hours of Jan. 21 lying in a pool of blood, unconscious and naked.

Senseless cases like this that have thrust Mexico into the headlines for all the wrong reasons. A story like Nabb's is shocking and disturbing — in essence, perfect fodder for the media to latch on to. However, by incessantly highlighting random acts of brutality, the media's sensationalization of tourists affected by Mexican crime reveals a gap between perception and reality.

Mexico is a hugely popular tourist destination for Canadians. According to the Mexican Secretary of Tourism, 1.6 million Canadians travelled south to Mexico in 2011. Out of those many visitors, six Canadians were murdered in 2011, while 50 were victims of assault.

One of those murder victims was 39-year-old Ximena Osegueda, a UBC doctoral student who, along with her boyfriend, was recently stabbed and set on fire before being buried on a beach. That case also raised concerns about students travelling or studying in Mexico.

Recognizing crime in Mexico is undoubtedly important, particularly in regions along the American border that are plagued by long-standing conflicts fuelled by drug wars. But cases like Nabb's beating are highlighted with fervour by the media for an illogical poor reason — they're extraordinary, isolated incidents that travelers will rarely experience.

Regardless, the Department of Foreign Affairs ominously warns Canadians they should use a high degree of caution when traveling to Mexico, due to its "deteriorating security situation in many parts of the country."

But I would also advise Canadians to take caution when travelling in Edmonton's inner city, famous in recent years for the high homicide rate. A sideways glance at the wrong person may just lead to some uncomfortable remarks — or worse, an assault.

In other words, urging Canadians to exercise caution when travelling to Mexico is a moot point, because any apt traveler knows they should exercise caution wherever they go. Avoid crime-ridden areas, travel with another person at all times, listen to your gut instinct, don't buy drugs — tidbits that typically keep most people out of harm's way.

In addition, the media's frenzy erroneously simplifies Mexico's crime rate as representative of the entire country, which is unfair and detrimental to its tourist-driven economy. Just like Edmonton, crime is more pervasive in certain regions than others. Crime exists wherever you go, so it ultimately boils down to using common sense.

Besides, there are many places that are remarkably safe. Resorts in, for example, Puerto Vallarta, are clean and secure. When I visited, my trip to the nearby village was greeted by friendly locals. Puerto Vallarta's crime rate, like that of many tourist destinations, is low. Exactly zero Canadians and U.S. citizens were murdered in Puerto Vallarta in 2010. Might we not caution Mexicans to avoid Edmonton, which recorded nearly 50 murders last year?

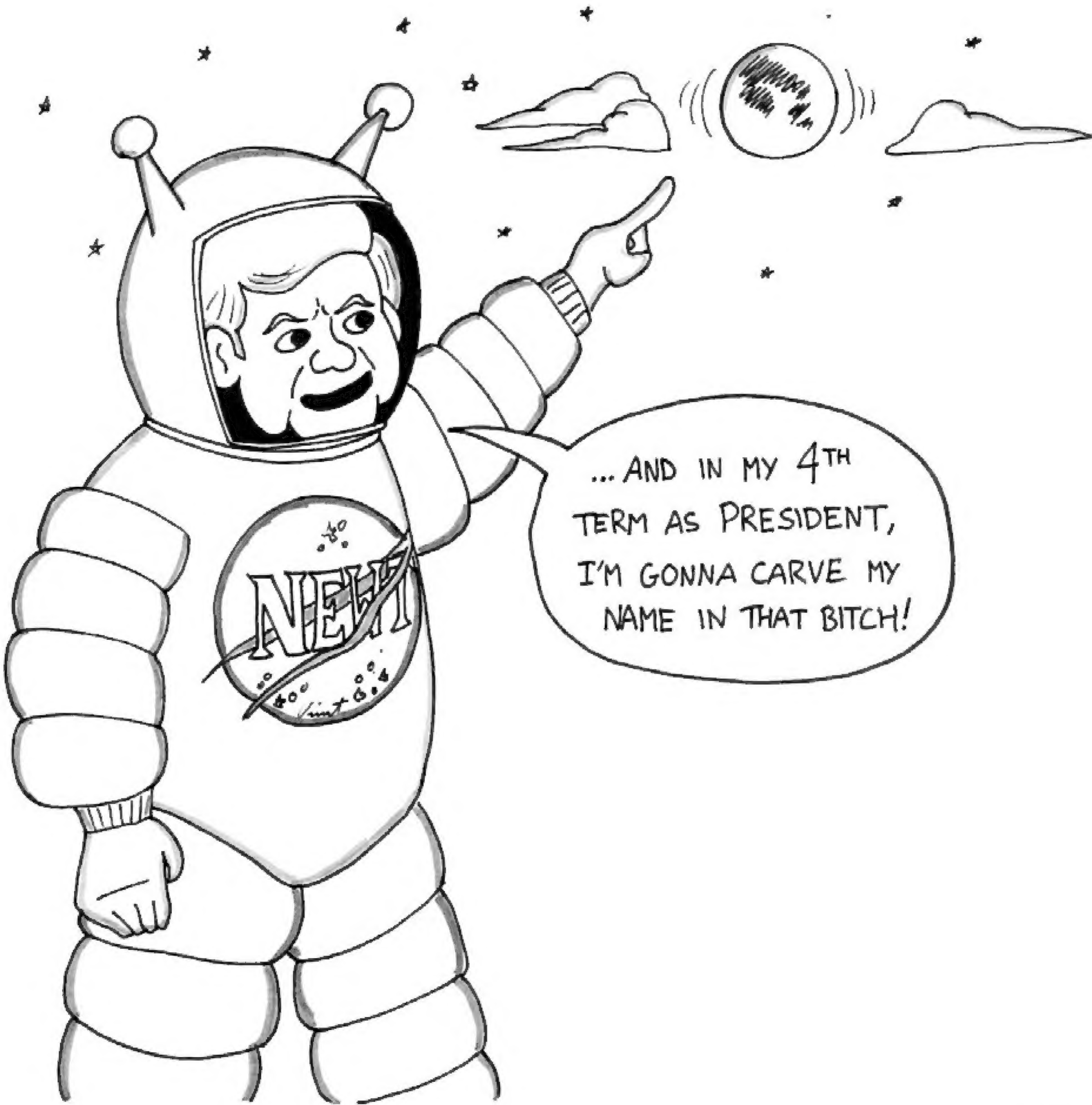
Although Nabb's case was horrific and undeserved, certain precautions on her part could have allowed her to avoid the incident altogether. Mazatlan, the city in which Nabb and her husband were travelling, is known to be a rougher region of the country, and travelling there is generally discouraged. Additionally, Nabb was walking in the resort alone in the middle of the night, without even informing her sleeping husband of her whereabouts before leaving the room.

Obviously, the blame shouldn't be laid on Nabb for suffering a brutal beating. But what we can learn from her case is that taking a few precautions like those — the same precautions we'd take anywhere — can save us a lot of trouble in the long run.

Nabb's story is tragic, as is Osegueda's, but it's unfair to say that these incidents are indicative of a widespread crime problem in all of Mexico. Taking a rational approach and actually looking at the hard facts clearly reveals that crime is, in fact, not as concerning of an issue as the Canadian media claims. If we obsess over isolated incidents rather than looking at the bigger picture, the victims merely become ourselves.

So, the decision is yours — enjoy Mexico's balmy weather and lovely beaches, or waste your time worrying about what if.

**Alex Migdal**  
NEWS EDITOR



ROSS VINCENT

## letters to the editor

### Mi Tian will be missed

On the last day of class, my student Mi Tian (Tristan Mi) serenaded me from the hallway in Mandarin and English. As a trained musician, I can recognize an excellent singer, and that afternoon I heard one. Mi Tian made me feel like the most fortunate instructor on campus. What a marvelous present!

For his final presentation to our class, Mi Tian recited a long poem in Mandarin. Then, dressed as a scholar in the Confucian tradition, he explained the poem's meaning and placed it in the context of a long tradition of literature. I think my class learned a great deal that day. I know I did. Mi Tian's performance impressed me so much that I gratefully accepted his invitation to watch him perform in a show with the university's drama department. Over the next few years, he made a name for himself in the BFA acting program.

I write these lines to celebrate the rich, full life of a young man who offered so much to so many. During 22 years, Mi Tian lived profoundly. One day in class, I asked one of my students to read Pablo Neruda's early poem, "Puedo escribir esta noche las líneas más tristes" (Tonight I Can Write the Saddest Lines). After hearing it in Spanish, my multilingual students read translations in English, French, Portuguese, Italian, and Polish. Finally Mi Tian recited as well, making Neruda's lines resound powerfully in Mandarin. I will never forget that reading. No one there will ever forget it.

**Marco Katz**  
FORMER ENGLISH INSTRUCTOR

### FROM THE WEB

#### Important to know who's on Students' Council

(Re: "Council Forum, January 24, 2012" by April Hudson, Jan. 25)

"A question was posed about the new SU brochure, which features the executive members but leaves no space for councillor names. Tighe answered that he wants to put the names of the councillors on the back of the brochure."

Yes, this sums up Students' Council nicely, doesn't it?

**"Jimbo"**  
VIA INTERNET

#### Greek organizations are for conformists

(Re: "Is joining a Greek organization valuable?" By Owais Yahya & Josh Schmaltz, Jan. 25)

Ahhhh yes, join the flock for you are a sheep.

**"Muciope"**  
VIA INTERNET

#### Field contest evaluation misses key details

(Re: "Album Battle: Tara Oram vs. Jessie Farrell?" By Ryan Bromsgrove, Jan. 25)

I'd like to inquire as to the process for a re-evaluation of your third criteria: "Most likely to have spent significant time in a field."

While it's true that I hail from Vancouver, I now live on Vancouver Island where I spend extensive time

walking in and occasionally laying around in fields. Furthermore, the variety of my field time is diverse: Grass fields, wheat fields, blueberry fields, and more.

One lesser known fact that provides me an advantage in the field category is that I run a small organic juice & smoothie bar called Jessie's Juice Co (<http://www.facebook.com/jessiesjuiceco>) that uses as much local and organic product as possible. When I'm not touring, I'm often picking up produce at local farms, and in order to do so, traipse through their fields.

So, I respectfully request my appeal be considered and your judgement be rendered accordingly.

**Jessie Farrell**  
FIELD LOVER EXTRAORDINAIRE

#### Income from tips can beat a nurse's salary

(Re: "Tipping: the right thing to do, or useless practice?" by Alana Willerton & Nick Ong, Jan. 25)

As a nurse with a degree, I agree that tipping has gotten a little out of control. It disturbs me to know that I can run for 12 hours straight and love and stress over my patients — who are our country's children — and their critical, life threatening illnesses and come home to find out my husband has made more than me while serving. It disturbs us both to know he will also likely take a pay cut when he finishes school and changes his role from a server to a teacher.



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exist?

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to the  
classroom

**3**  
lines  
**free**



**Fashion  
streeters**

Arts  
faculty  
looks to  
**cut**  
\$1.5 million  
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# NDP leadership hopefuls not an inspiring lot



**Andrew Jeffrey**  
OPINION STAFF

Stop anyone on the street, ask them whether they prefer Newt Gingrich or Mitt Romney and no matter how negative, you'll likely at least get some sort of intelligible answer. Do the same for the NDP leadership candidates and you'll often only be met with a shrug and a confused response of "Who?" behind a staggeringly huge wall of apathy.

The slow trudge to find a successor to Jack Layton has been largely portrayed by the media as a drawn-out and dull affair in front of an uncaring Canadian public. It's gotten to the point where most people couldn't tell you the first thing about the differences between Thomas Mulcair and Brian Topp. But what's even worse is Canadians who have followed these candidates may still have the same problem.

The depiction of a boring leadership competition is completely justified given the candidates choosing to be largely indistinguishable from one another when it comes to their political views. In Sunday's debate in Halifax, the moderator actually had to urge them to find some ground to disagree upon at the start, as up until this point many of the "debates" included only slight discrepancies in views that were largely in agreement. Their debates are not exactly riveting, and nor are the contenders; a recent poll by Abacus Data found that 40 per cent of Canadians are unaware of who any of the NDP candidates are.

It may seem unfair to compare the potential nominees for President of the United States to the potential leaders of an opposition party that could still easily fall back to third place in the next election, but the actions of the NDP candidates are partly inspired by the Republican primaries.

**■ Their hesitance to disagree has made them unmemorable and caused the Canadian public to tune out from what should be an interesting race.**

The reason the NDP candidates are so hesitant to disagree with one another is partly out of fear. They're hesitant to poke holes in each others' policies, incite too much disagreement or make each other look bad after how detrimental the debates of Romney and Gingrich have been to both their presidential odds. Factor in the Conservative Party's uncanny ability to defeat opposition like Stéphane Dion and Michael Ignatieff in past elections using unflattering sound bites from the politicians' pasts and it's almost understandable why the NDP candidates might prefer boring right now.

While their dedication to avoiding internecine battles is admirable, the net effect has been negative. Their hesitance to disagree has made them forgettable and caused the Canadian public to tune out from what could be an interesting race. After all, Jack Layton was one of the most popular Canadian politicians in years and many Canadians should be inter-



**ALL SMILES, NO EXCITEMENT** They look happy, but few Canadians can actually tell these NDP leadership candidates apart. SUPPLIED

ested to see if his successor can continue the NDP's surge of popularity from last year.

In all fairness, the debate on Sunday featured some actual debating and disagreement at the moderator's request. The other candidates questioned frontrunner Thomas Mulcair on a number of subjects and seemed to have unique ideas. For the sake of this party's future, this discontent in the party ranks must only grow. This should only be the beginning as the

candidates set themselves apart and becoming unique leadership candidates that Canadians can get behind. The results will be announced on March 24, which still gives the NDP candidates plenty of time to improve their image and actually become known to Canadian voters.

The way to defeat the Conservative party isn't through thinking of what they could turn against you in attack ads, but in finding holes in their policies, finding reasons as to why

not only Conservatives are unfit for leadership but why other leadership rivals in your party aren't as suitable. It's about making the Canadian public aware of why you alone are the best fit as leader of a party that is the best choice for controlling Canada's government.

Until an NDP candidate can do that, most Canadians will continue to be completely unaffected and unaware of what's actually happening in the party.

## This year's SU elections need competition



**Adrian Lahola-Chomiak**  
OPINION STAFF

An election should be like a trip to the supermarket. I should be able to browse the fruits and vegetables, toss away the bruised ones and choose that one perfect apple way at the back which has a reasonable vision for the other produce and the leadership skills to get them there. Unfortunately, the Students' Union executive election at the university last year was more reminiscent of shopping at a Soviet food dispensary than your local Save-On foods.

**■ What we got last year were candidates who by virtue of their desire to become executives were granted the position almost by default.**

In that election, only one executive position was contested. Candidates ran campaigns out of courtesy since the only opponent they were facing was the voter apathy/none of the above double bill. What we got cannot in the truest sense of the word have been called a democratic election. It could be more aptly described as a sign-up sheet.

None of this is the fault of those candidates. Unfortunately, our student government system did not attract people to participate. Despite the



**MORE CHOICE** Let's not have a repeat of last year's election. PHOTO ILLUSTRATION: RYAN BROMSGROVE

reasonable paycheck and valuable resumé-builder that comes with any of the positions, there was still a deficit of people willing to run.

It's a troubling problem for an organization that is supposed to be representative of the student body. Without some sort of vetting process, beyond filling out the paperwork and collecting the paltry 50 signatures required to run for office, the election becomes more of a test of will than popularity amongst students. What we got last year were candidates who by virtue of their desire to become executives were granted the

position almost by default.

I hope this year we see a drastically different political scenario, both on the ballot and in the forums. A hotly-contested showdown for all of the positions not only gives students choice, but is much more likely to get them involved than a few awkward, embarrassed speeches from the only guys who bothered to run. What's more, this kind of competition would force the candidates to put some effort into meeting students and getting them interested in the SU.

Competition was the fuel for the effort both Colten Yamagishi and David

McBean put into the only semi-interesting race. This year, we need every position contested. If the candidates for every position were forced to get out there and get themselves known, students would be much more interested, more likely to vote, and more likely to get involved with the SU. And along with that, candidates who produce lazy posters and stumble through speeches would face the defeat they deserve.

We can be bothered to get together and play some dodgeball in order to set a world record, but when it comes to our student government, we seem to treat it the same way we treat online homework assignments. We deal with it as fast as possible and then put it out of our mind the rest of the time. If there is anything that could breathe some life into the electoral process, it is competition between viable candidates who care about making the school a better place.

After the last election cycle came to a close, we were lucky to get candidates as good as they turned out to be. But we lost a significant portion of what characterizes the process when we lost our opportunity to actually choose. Voter apathy is always an issue, and nothing else breeds disinterest more in any race than a predetermined ending. Voting last year was a formality, and few actually paid attention at all.

Competition would serve the dual purposes of getting students more interested in the election, and at the same time educating them about what the Students' Union representatives would plan to do with their time. So if anyone out there is considering running for office, please take the plunge and get into the fight. Don't let last year repeat itself.

## the marble pedestal

COMPILED BY **Ravanne Lawday**

I used to be against the ever-changing technology of cellphones, but last week I finally got with the times. Before now, I'd a phone of relatively normal IQ: I was able to access emails, Facebook, and fiddle around on a touchscreen. Then, it broke and my outlook on technology changed.

When I tried to save my normal phone, I was told that I might as well conduct a Viking funeral for it, because there was no way that thing was coming back to life. I was instantly stricken by sadness. That machine had always been the little phone that could.

But apparently, I'd racked up enough credit for a new phone of my choice. After a couple of tests, and I walked out with the most expensive phone they had in stock: the Einstein of smartphones, the LG Eclipse. The fun of a touchscreen and an adventurous keyboard sold me. Within seconds I could operate my several email accounts, check-in to my current location on Facebook and even set a gorgeous man wearing a top-hat as my background. I was in love.

One week later, I'm still infatuated. Important emails are only a click away, texting and co-ordinating with friends is less of a hassle, and I don't have to grab my laptop to look up pointless information anymore. Friends, take it from a former technophobe, smartphones are worth it. My only regret is that it took me this long to put them on the Marble Pedestal.



# #3LF

## three lines free

Got something that you need to get off your mind? Either email us at [threelinesfree@gateway.ualberta.ca](mailto:threelinesfree@gateway.ualberta.ca), tweet @threelinesfree, or message us at [www.thegatewayonline.ca/threelinesfree](http://www.thegatewayonline.ca/threelinesfree)

The best way for the University to save money would be to lay off some of the well-paid higher-ups in the University's administration.

So the BSA believes the bank is at fault (from the jan 25 article in the gateway). Are you fucking serious? Way to defend your own...

Why would anyone date hipsters? It's all about dating computer/math/science geeks obviously.

Why is the fashion profile always a hipster? Some of us dress well without describing our outfit as both Goodwill and Aritzia.

What's the big deal with the 99% and 1%? It's been going in since the start of the industrial revolution. Get over it.

Five hundred thousand:  
Buys three faculty staff or  
Half a president.

Dear psych104 ex-lover,  
tell me why you are punishing me or sit elsewhere please.

Rory Tighe looks like Patrick Swayze. But can he dance? No.

To the young gentleman hairdresser at The Stylistics Hair Group in Hub: Gawd yer cute. Signed, The Ginger Grad Student.

Red-haired engineer with black stalker coat - who are you? You give me the chills.

If you're gonna play tetris in class... be good at it! you put all the pieces in the wrong way!!

Library staff want to know..what happened between you and the smiling girl?  
is it bad that i want to sleep with cute girl in my christian love and marriage course. you know who you are.

To the redhead in the third row of ENGL 223: STOP BBMING IN CLASS! The constant clicking of your keyboard is making everyone hate you.

Check out Islam Awareness Week - February 6 - 10! On campus!

I find it ironic that in an infection and immunity class you are continuously coughing all over the back of my head

If you book a study room to watch music videos have the fucking decency to turn the volume down so people trying to study in the quite can do so. Assholes.

The SUTV news feed is shit.

I like ferraris

SUB drinking fountain used to be best on campus now a plastic bag

Dear "Science Student":  
Which art students love ponies?  
None. I'm in Comp. Sci.

The Gateway reserves the right to refuse publication of any submission it deem racist, sexist or otherwise hateful in nature. We aren't able to print all submissions, but we'll try.

# councilwatch

COMPILED BY Ryan Bromsgrove

Given the recent kerfuffle regarding the BSA involving the minor inconvenience of more than \$27,000 going awry, you'd expect Students' Council to have some pretty strong opinions about them. Last week, they voted 15-8 in favour of granting a referendum for their members regarding a four-year extension of their Faculty Association Membership Fee. And given the publicly-available information thus far — that some unnamed person took advantage of a bank error to whisk away a tiny fortune and is currently going through the university's disciplinary process which shows little sign of effectiveness — that's probably the right way to vote. Give the decision to the business students over what to do with their faculty association.

But council is privy to more than just the publicly-available information, and eight of them, based on the full extent of their knowledge, decided to withhold their assent. The problem is that none of them bothered to explain why. Despite one-third of council voting against the motion, nobody took the time to speak against it. The closest we got was SU President Tighe's revelation that there are outstanding requests of documents from the Audit Committee to the BSA from about a year ago, and combined with everything else lately that should certainly be worrying. But it was coupled with an explanation that the BSA provides valuable services that would be lost without the fee extension.

There was a long discussion in-camera after the BSA's presentation at the previous council session, and councillors can't debate on information that hasn't been made public. But some information has been made public since then, and they certainly could have spoken about the embezzlement itself and how the BSA has handled the situation, ignoring any more specific details not yet made public.

To be sure, had they gone back in-camera to debate this openly, I'd be complaining about that as well, but these are the consequences of the reckless decision to go in-camera in the first place at the previous council — with no debate, by the way. It wouldn't have been ideal for council to return to its secret debate, but secret debate sure beats no debate. Because a decision made with no debate, with a significant number of councillors on both sides, means only one thing. Everybody came to the vote with a pre-determined decision, unprepared to serve students best by engaging in debate, sharing their thoughts on the issue, and being willing to change their minds — or having sufficient conviction in their opinion to try to persuade others. If this is how council is going to deal with tough situations, they might as well stay home and vote via email.

*Council Watch is a semi-regular feature wherein we listen to what Students' Council has to say, and praise or lambast them accordingly. Students' Council meets every second Tuesday, and they buy you a meal for joining them. Last time it was wraps, but we're all anxiously awaiting for chili night.*



# OCCUPY EDMONTON

So are we going to have a pile of dirty hippies rolling around our campus, or a movement that'll finally bring down tuition?

gatewayopinion

MEETINGS WEDNESDAY AT 5 IN 3-04 SUB

# ? info week

## FEBRUARY 6-9, 2012

### 6:00 & 7:15 PM NIGHTLY

Info Week is a series of free, program-specific information sessions that zero in on more than 70 full-time programs. The career focus changes each evening – plan to come on the night that interests you most. Sessions start at 6:00 pm and repeat at 7:15 pm nightly on Main Campus. Parking is free.

#### MONDAY, FEBRUARY 6

- Business & Administration (12 programs)
- Media & Design (4 programs)
- Hospitality & Culinary Arts (4 programs)

#### TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 7

- Engineering Technologies (12 programs)
- IT & Electronics (7 programs)

#### WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 8

- Building Construction & Design (5 programs)
- Environmental Management (9 programs)
- Trades & Industrial (6 programs)

#### THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 9

- Animal Studies (2 programs)
- Health Sciences (16 programs)

#### EXTRA INFO EVERY NIGHT

- Financial Aid, Academic Upgrading and Continuing Education staff on hand for your questions.
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# SUB renovation ideas that really kick some ass



**Opinion Staff**  
GROUP COMMENTARY

The plan for SUB includes some nifty looking renovations. But *The Gateway* wonders if we can't think up a few better ideas.

**Katelyn Hoffart**

When the mere thought of stepping out into -40C weather induces irrepressible fits that leave you sprawled across the floor crying, it's time to consider a tropical holiday. But since most of us are poor from spending all of our earnings on tuition and booze, the beach is going to have to come to the U of A.

If I'm going to have to kick in a whole \$9 for SUB renovations, we're going to do it my way. To cope with the seemingly endless winter months, the renovation priority needs to be a tropical oasis located in SUB. We'll clear out the whole bottom level of the bookstore and uncomfortable seating and replace it with sand. None of that half-assed playground sand; we're talking about imported white granular perfection from Mexico.

Of course there will be turquoise-blue water home to thousands of friendly dolphins just as we were promised by all those pleasant SeaWorld commercials. Maybe even a shark just to keep things interesting. The temperature will be wonderfully warm, and margaritas will be served by shirtless muscular pool boys. Lots of pool boys. Furthermore



**FIRING MY LASER** Why stop at study space and natural lighting when you can slap a laser on the sucker? PHOTO ILLUSTRATION: DAN MCKECHNIE

the coup de grâce of this venue would be an artistic fountain that gushes out tequila. Let's do the right renovation here: say yes to majestic marine mammals and resort-like grandeur.

**Ryan Bromsgrove**

SUB needs giant mechanical legs. It's no fun being stuck in this one position on campus. A simple spider-like contraption could be attached to its sides, enabling the whole building to shamle across to Humanities and

drop students off, rather than force them to face the unforgiving cold and minor discomfort associated with walking. Don't want to take the elevator to RATT? No problem. Just get SUB to trot over to Dewey's instead.

Better, once we have SUB walking, it's only a little more work to attach a couple of lasers to the side of it. Thus weaponized, we can take over the city. Not even mutant Stephen Mandel could stand up to that sort of mighty power. University Hall will be the first building to go, followed

by Old Arts — because seriously.

That's right. Give me eight mechanical legs and a laser for each side of the building, and forget renovating SUB. I'm going to renovate the shit out of all of campus.

**Adrian Lahola-Chomiak**

I am sick of having to wait for elevators and waddle with crowds up and down stairs all around campus. I dream of more efficient modes of transport, whisking me down stories while simultaneously clearing

up space for those going up. It sound like a pipe dream but I think that it is time to implement a fireman pole system.

Imagine it. Sliding down to the bookstore after a round of tequila shots at RATT for lunch. Imagine not having to deal with crowds of people who walk up the centre of the stairs single file. Imagine people not taking the elevator down two floors because they're too lazy to walk over to the stairs.

I'm sure some wusses out there are thinking about the possible safety issues associated with cutting a hole through a building and then getting to slide down a pole unharnessed. To them I would say that we have to stop coddling students and practice some natural selection. Handrails? Emergency stop buttons? Time to man up and slide down the big shiny metal pole and suck up those broken ankles you'll get at the bottom.

Some people say that I'm a dreamer, but I do believe that if we drop our petty campaigns for student space and making the lower level of SUB useful, and unite behind the cause of relieving stair and elevator congestion with fireman poles, we can get it done.

**Andrew Jeffrey**

This might sound crazy, but if SUB could get elevators that go even just a month without having to be serviced, that'd be the most incredible improvement. Yes, there's always the alternative of taking the incredibly creepy concrete staircase, but let's be honest, none of us feel safe taking those. For the sake of us all not feeling like we're about to be assaulted, please, fix the elevators.

## Turns out I'm pretty much the single greatest guy who ever lived



**Darcy Ropchan**  
OPINION STAFF

Everywhere I go, people always ask me why I'm so great. Professors, doctors and politicians all want to know, "What is it that makes you so much smarter, handsome and better than us?" And I honestly don't know. Being awesome isn't a choice: it's something that you're born with.

If you don't understand why people look up to me, consider this: there are no positive role models these days. Sure, Susan Boyle may have won the hearts of millions by singing a stupid song on TV. And president Obama tried to give us change that we could believe in. Anyone can sing and change things. But do they write consistently hilarious humour articles all while maintaining a solid D+ average? Hell no. That's a feat that only a select few can pull off. And by a select few, I refer here to myself.

The next question that I get asked the most, after "Will you marry me?" is "Can you please teach me to stop being a loser, and start being as great as you?" At first I thought that was impossible.

You can't teach someone to be an artist. You either have it or you don't. But the more I think about it, the more I realize this world could use a little more Darcy in it. I'm willing to give a small glimpse into my life, so you might become maybe a tenth as awesome as I am.

The first thing you should do is act like you don't give a shit about anything. Cool people like me don't have time to care about what other people say or think. I don't listen to every little detail about some pointless story that my friends or family tell. I'm a busy guy and have places to be.

The best way to seem like you're too awesome to care is to give one word answers to everything you're told. Is your friend telling you about how they just got their test results back from the doctor and it doesn't look good? Just reply with a simple "oh" or "sounds cool." Bonus points for texting on your phone while they're trying to unload their worries on you. You're worrying about important, awesome stuff. You don't have time for cancer diagnoses.

The next step is to always show up late for everything. Class, dates, weddings, funerals, anything. I'm so awesome that I

can't bother to remember when things start. Who has the time for that? I always show up at least half an hour late to everything I'm invited to. Showing up late makes people think you were too busy doing awesome shit to arrive on time.

I was once 45 minutes late to my great-great-grandmother's funeral. I tried to be as loud as I could when I entered so everyone would know that I'd arrived.

I could hear my family whispering to each other. They must have been saying: "Gee, he's late and he reeks of cigarettes and alcohol. He must have been busy doing something awesome last night." Just remember my motto: "I'm great, I'm going to be late, make them wait."

There's much more, but you'll never be as awesome, suave and well-dressed as I am, so it's not worth trying. But if you've deluded yourself otherwise and want to follow in my footsteps, take my advice as a starting point. Some of you might be asking, "Why would we ever want to be like you?" Well, because fuck you, that's why.

### LETTERS • CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

I also know that I do not want the same 16-year-old punk from McDonald's serving me my \$200 dinner when I go out on a special occasion and I appreciate that the servers in nicer restaurants work a lot harder to make the "experience" than those at Denny's who might swing by once and grumpily ask if you want more coffee. Having said that, I do believe in tipping based on service and quality of food, etc.

**Lauren Van Dassen**  
VIA INTERNET

### Apparent defence of business students clearly a cunning attack

(Re: "Business students need to fight bad image" by Ryan Bromsgrove, Jan. 25)

Business students don't owe you or the school anything. Last time I checked, university wasn't a popularity contest. If you really think you're that talented at PR, maybe you should reconsider what faculty you're in. It is incredible how you write such cruel things about the business faculty and then quickly say that those aren't your views. Nice try pal but it's quite obvious you're not the biggest fan of business students. Why was your article on the front page of the paper? I have no idea. Why is it considered a top opinion? That's even a bigger mystery but, from what I can tell, the business faculty is not popular amongst Gateway staff. How about meeting some real life business undergrads in the BSA lounge instead of sitting in SUB pretending you know what the school needs.

**Ari Gold**  
VIA INTERNET

### Countries without tipping have bad service

(Re: "Tipping: the right thing to do, or useless practice?" by Alana Willerton & Nick Ong, Jan. 25)

Some of the best service I ever receive is at Denny's. Servers at expensive restaurants may make more, but your average server makes far less than a junior engineer

And again I will reiterate: go to a city where no one tips and see what kind of service you receive. In these cities there is literally no incentive to give good service. The waitress is paid the same regardless of whether the food comes on time, or after it has gotten cold. She is paid the same whether she gives you a water for free or charges you. The simple fact that tips can be denied for bad service means that in Canada we do get better service. It also means that our bill is cheaper because the servers don't have to get paid more.

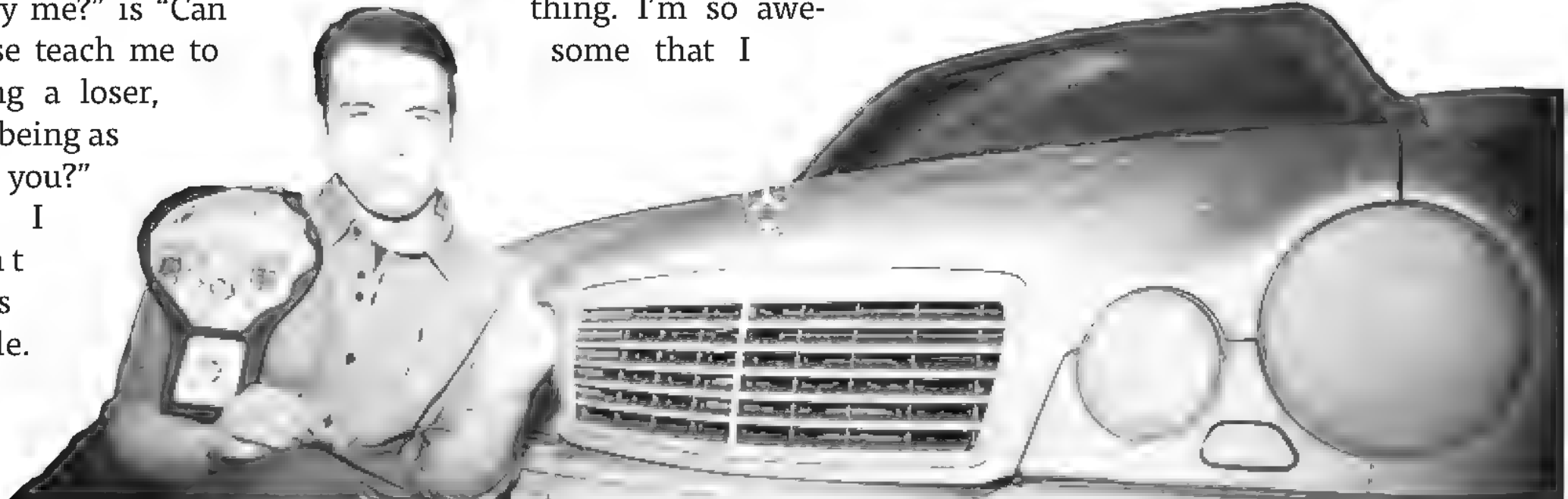
By eliminating tipping we would be agreeing to pay more for worse service. I fail to see how that makes any logical sense.

**"Brian"**  
VIA INTERNET

Letters to the editor should be sent to [letters@gateway.ualberta.ca](mailto:letters@gateway.ualberta.ca) or delivered by paper airplane to SUB 3-04. No attachments please — especially if using the airplane method.

The Gateway reserves the right to edit letters for length and clarity, and refuse publication of any it deems racist, sexist, libellous or hateful in nature. The Gateway also reserves the right to publish letters online.

Letters to the editor should be no longer than 350 words, and should include the author's name, program, year of study, and student ID number to be considered for publication.





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DAN MCKECHNIE

## Refusing to use Twitter and Facebook for no real reason



**Ryan Bromsgrove**  
OPINION EDITOR

I don't use Twitter or Facebook. And whenever they come up in conversation, it's vitally important that I make sure everyone knows that I refuse to sign up because I think "social media" is silly.

Look at all you sheep joining the latest internet fads to share with the world all your useless thoughts about your cats and meaningless lives. I've got a little newsflash here: nobody cares. You'll find out soon enough, when we finally reach my arbitrary moving goalpost date of two years from whenever "now" is, when these services will die the same horrible death as Myspace. All social networks die. My sample size is one. More than enough.

Anyhow, after I out myself as one of the few sane ones left, people tell me that they like seeing updates about other people's cats. I straight up refuse to believe them. Even if true, the fact remains that they shouldn't like those things — and I know what's best for them.

Then they pipe up that people use these services to share things that are legitimately interesting: news updates, quickly disseminating information between multiple groups of friends at once, making contacts, sharing event information or live-reporting important things. That's when I stop

"Do you realize that in exchange for the services they provide at no immediate cost, they take the personal information that you freely give and then show you things that you might be interested in purchasing — and then force you to purchase them?"

listening. Because again, I refuse to believe this, and my pride will never allow me to check for myself if they're actually anything worth using.

Finally, I recognize the practical arguments for joining these networks, centering around simply reaching a lot of people with your message, but again, I care not. I would rather exhaustingly track people down one by one by phone or in-person than spend less than a minute updating everyone at once on Facebook or Twitter. If we get to this point in the real-life argument, I generally throw my hands up in the air in exasperation and expel a disdainful sigh, indicating that I shall reluctantly shut up — but will retain an air of superiority for the remainder of our time together.

To sum up, when it comes to the purported usefulness of these services I'm personally invested in being willfully ignorant, because it's part of my identity to think that stuff other people do is frivolous and trivial. I have more important things to do, like living in the past where it's comfortable and warm.

Back in the old days, if you wanted to talk to a friend you picked up the phone. You didn't "twitter" at them, you dialed 10 digits and spoke into the devil box. Some people try to characterize me as the same sort of

person who resisted the introduction of the telephone, but they're completely wrong. As I said earlier, Twitter and Facebook are objectively useless, and therefore they will soon shut down. On the other hand, telephones were and are useful, so they have and will stick around.

And when you use the phone, you don't get advertisers yelling down it at you. I mean look at all those ads on Facebook and Twitter. Do you realize that in exchange for the services they provide at no immediate cost, they take the personal information that you freely give and then show you things that you might be interested in purchasing — and then force you to purchase them? Talk about an invasion of privacy. It's practically theft.

No, I'll stay right where I am, thank you very much. Instead of rationally considering what information, if any, about myself I wish to be public in exchange for a method of communication that many find useful, I shall dismiss the concept entirely and stick to my good old reliable telephone line.

Sometimes it just feels like everybody in the world is wrong except me. If only there were a way I could seek out like-minded people and validate my convictions thusly. Alas, all I have is a four-year-old cellphone I bought through Kijiji a few months ago.



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## the burlap sack

COMPILED BY **Nathan Chu**

I'm sorry Colten Yamagishi, but you've really dropped the ball on scheduling Break the Record 2012. Unless you haven't heard, the University of Alberta is attempting to take back the Guinness World Record for largest dodgeball game from UC Irvine this Friday at noon in the Butterdome. And the problem is that it's this Friday at noon.

According to a scan through Bear Tracks, there are about 500 undergraduate lectures, labs, or seminars occurring from 10 a.m. (when

registration opens) to 1 p.m. (the approximate ending time). That's more than 25,000 undergrads out of the 31,000 or so who may have class at that time, which means that scheduling alone excludes about 80 per cent of the main population of students who we are relying on to fuel this event.

Skip your classes, you say?

Unfortunately for some students — myself and 350 of my classmates included — we're nearing midterm season once again, and some may actually have one during that time.

The game should have been scheduled weeks earlier at 2 p.m. during the first Friday of winter term. That way there would be no midterms, no labs, and it wouldn't

interfere with people who work evenings. Also, if there is a more ideal time to skip a class than the first week when you haven't learned anything, then I don't know it.

And for those worried about Antifreeze, consider this. The interests of 250 people, or the pride of an entire university?

If our attempt fails, we can blame the problem on terrible scheduling so very deserving of being thrown in the burlap sack.

*The Burlap Sack is a semi-regular feature where a person or group who needs to be put in a sack and beaten is ridiculed in print. No sack beatings are actually administered. Promise.*



# Deferral fee allows U of A to profit from student misery



**Scott Fenwick**  
OPINION STAFF

When you're severely sick or have a close family member die, these are the moments when you just want to stay home and curl-up in a ball. But if this happens during final exams, for most faculties at the University of Alberta, it's an excuse to charge you \$48.70.

The university currently charges that fee for each deferred exam, meaning that if a full-time student missed five final exams because of illness or a family member's death they would have to pay \$243.50 to make it up. Not only does this fee add insult to injury, but it's possibly one of the most unethical fees the university charges.

Under the university's academic calendar, students may apply for a deferred final exam if an "incapacitating illness, severe domestic affliction or other compelling reason" keeps them from writing the original one.

This could mean anything from getting sick with Swine Flu, to getting in a car accident or having a family member die. But under the university's Reasonable Accommodation Policy, the only circumstances where fees are normally waived are where the original final was missed because of religious reasons or a long-term illness.

The current idea of removing this

**"If anything, the current fees deter students from saving their academic record. One of the worst possible scenarios is that this fee makes a student defer fewer finals than they're eligible for in order to soften the financial blow."**

fee was raised last October in the Academic Standards Committee of General Faculties Council, the university's second-highest legislative body. One of the main defences supporting the fee was that it acts as a deterrent. According to a committee document, there was a concern that waiving the fee would increase exam deferral requests, thereby raising faculties' expenses.

But there are two problems with this. First, if an exam deferral is being granted to a student in the first place, it's usually because there's a legitimate reason. It's therefore not clear what exactly needs to be deterred. In nearly all circumstances, students writing deferred exams are getting penalized for things beyond their own control.

If anything, the current fees deter students from saving their academic record. One of the worst possible scenarios is that this fee makes a student defer fewer finals than they're eligible for in order to soften the financial blow.

For example, if something kept a student from writing five finals, he or she may choose to defer only three of them, and then take a severely reduced mark in the other two.

The second problem with the "deterrence" defence is that deferred exam fees don't go directly to the

faculty. Rather, they go directly into the university's general operating budget. It's not immediately clear exactly what real costs are associated with the deferred exams at all, let alone why they go where they do or if they'll make it back to the faculties.

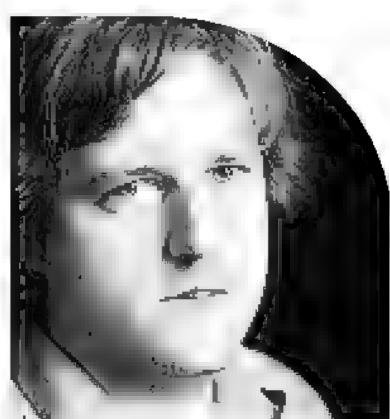
Luckily, there are some voices supporting the removal of this unethical fee. The School of Business and the Faculty of Engineering have already stopped charging for deferred exams. Students' Union Vice-President (Academic) Emerson Csorba, who sits on the Academic Standards Committee, has also already put his opposition on the record.

But this is still early days. Official discussion on dropping the fee started in October and a formal proposal hasn't been put on the table yet because it still needs the backing of the university's deans.

Given the university's finances, some of them may do whatever it takes to protect their budget and claw more money.

It will likely take a co-ordinated effort between the SU and undergraduate faculty associations to get the fee eliminated. This issue needs to be put on the desk of every dean, with every student telling them that this fee isn't acceptable. The U of A has no right to make money off of students' misery.

# Flying the flag not an inalienable right



**Ryan Bromsgrove**  
OPINION EDITOR

Clearly the most pressing concern for our MPs right now is the lack of a law that make it illegal to prevent somebody from displaying a Canadian flag. Because that was the first order of business they discussed when they returned to Parliament after a six-week break on Monday.

A private member's bill from Conservative MP John Carmichael, Bill C-288's harshest punishment for preventing somebody expressing their patriotism in this way would be two years in jail. The most immediate question this bill raises is how exactly people are being prevented from displaying the Canadian flag in ways the law currently doesn't already prohibit.

Obviously, if somebody rips your flagpole out of the ground, they're damaging your personal property and the law has you covered. The only situation where this appears to have been a problem for anyone is the very specific cases of homeowners' associations making rules against displaying the flag — for whatever reasons they may have.

To which the obvious solution is if you don't like their rules, don't move into the sorts of housing communities that breed these meddling snobs in the first place. Freedom isn't the right to fly a flag, it's the right to make collective decisions without anybody else telling you what to do. And if you

willingly subject yourself to the decisions of such a group, you can either get out or seek to influence decisions more in your favour without crying to your MP like a child.

**■ If you don't like their rules, don't move into the sorts of housing communities that breed these meddling snobs...**

We have enough things to deal with without fining people or sending them to jail for wanting a community that doesn't allow the display of flags. Some in the Belle River, Ont. retirement community around which such a petty squabble took place last year complained that flags looked trailer-trashy, and they're entitled to that opinion. And if they've convinced the homeowners' association to keep flags out, then they have every right to live in a flag-free community. Yes, it's kind of stupid, but it's fair.

What's not fair is making up new laws to enforce something in an area where grown adults should be entirely capable of self-governing. For an MP to take this seriously enough to introduce a bill is governance for the sake of governance. Regardless of the patriotic intention and the wrappings of freedom, this sort of lawmaking goes against the freedom that Canadian veterans — the tools of choice when it comes to making emotional appeals to get what you want — fought and died for. That's the freedom for rational individuals to settle disputes and come to decisions on their own.

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#### THE BREAKFAST CLUB | APR 2, 2012

"Dear Mr. Vernon, we accept the fact that we had to sacrifice a whole Saturday in detention for whatever it was that we did wrong. What we did was wrong. But we think you're crazy to make us write this essay telling you who we think we are. What do you care? You see us as you want to see us... in the simplest terms and the most convenient definitions. You see us as a brain, an athlete, a basket case, a princess and a criminal. Correct? That's the way we saw each other at seven o'clock this morning. We were brainwashed."

### MORE INFORMATION

Interested in any of the above events? Want more details? Just send an email to the Student Programming Coordinator at [spc@su.ualberta.ca](mailto:spc@su.ualberta.ca)

Or check us out on the web:

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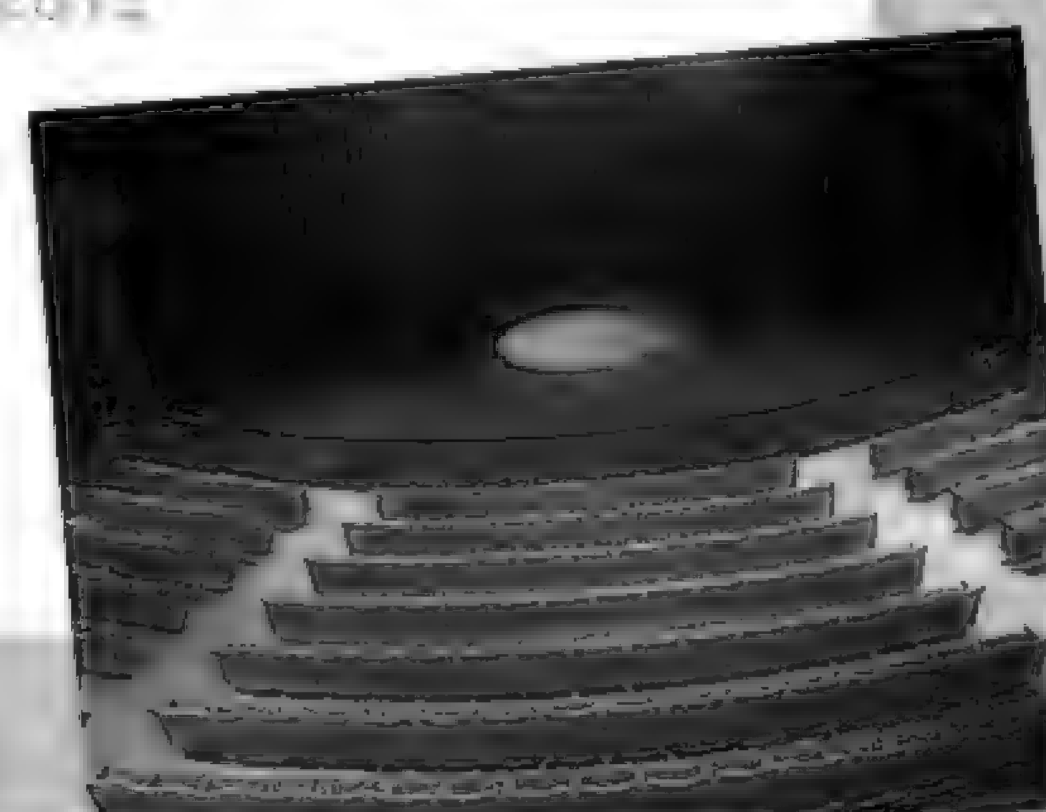
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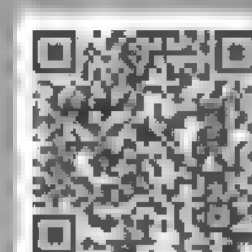
**First Place** Campus Badassadors - Dumbledore's Army

**Second Place** Narwhals

**Third Place** Eviscerators

**Spirit Award** UAB Bears & Pandas Athletes

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### BREAK THE ICE

What better way to start off Antifreeze than with an obstacle course? But this wasn't any old obstacle course – teams had to venture through 80 tires, crawl army-style under ropes, spin around on a bat five times, and even do fifty math questions all on a treacherous and icy Quad! The relay ended with a team race on four person skis, which naturally led to some pretty hilarious wipe-outs. Teams that finished the fastest did not necessarily win the event, since every incorrect math question added 10 seconds to their overall time. The stress, coupled with the random yelling of numbers by a particularly *and* organizer, led to some teams getting up to thirteen of the fifty questions wrong, bumping their race times way back! Winning the race was the Narwhals who apparently possess speed, intelligence, and a polar bear's ability to best the cold.

### BRAIN THAW

The third Antifreeze event was a trivia contest, with questions from five different categories: music, movie clips, general trivia, pop culture, and riddles. Although the movie clip sections were pretty easy and the riddles were quite tough the teams all used all of their remaining brain cells in this challenge to muster up some tricky answers. This event was a little embarrassing for the teams that didn't know that the Fresh Prince was born and raised in West Philly (not "the hood"), or to the teams that didn't know that Ariel (not Ariel) had been playing in every bar and club all summer. The CBAS team ended up taking home first place, proving an Arts degree has at least some use.

### BRAIN FREEZE

The Antifreeze event was a trivia contest, with questions from five different categories: music, movie clips, general trivia, pop culture, and riddles. Although the movie clip sections were pretty easy and the riddles were quite tough the teams all used all of their remaining brain cells in this challenge to muster up some tricky answers. This event was a little embarrassing for the teams that didn't know that the Fresh Prince was born and raised in West Philly (not "the hood"), or to the teams that didn't know that Ariel (not Ariel) had been playing in every bar and club all summer. The CBAS team ended up taking home first place, proving an Arts degree has at least some use.

### LICENSE TO CHILL

The Antifreeze event was a trivia contest, with questions from five different categories: music, movie clips, general trivia, pop culture, and riddles. Although the movie clip sections were pretty easy and the riddles were quite tough the teams all used all of their remaining brain cells in this challenge to muster up some tricky answers. This event was a little embarrassing for the teams that didn't know that the Fresh Prince was born and raised in West Philly (not "the hood"), or to the teams that didn't know that Ariel (not Ariel) had been playing in every bar and club all summer. The CBAS team ended up taking home first place, proving an Arts degree has at least some use.







# ANTIFREEZE 2012 - THANK YOU!



## BRENNAN MURPHY

Oh, AntiFreeze. What a week. Teams ran, built, ate, danced, and bargained their way to the top spot. But in the end, only one team was victorious. Regardless of who won, however, everyone had fun.

All I can really say is thank god the weather was much better this year. It did start out a little icy on Tuesday, with some pretty hard winds, but that only made the math problems more fun. I'll admit, the math questions were my idea. Sorry. As the week went on, things got better and better. Great job to all the teams in AntiFreeze this year; you all did extremely well and made for some great photos and videos that surely will go viral on the Internet.

Huge thanks to all the volunteers this year: Michael Schwake, Jessica Macumber, Shauna Kristoff, Tim Chan, Landon Kulych, Finbarr Timbers, Cody Thorpe, Jocelyn Bury, Bill Pickering, Gavin McAndrews, Courtney Kowal, Saadiq Sumar, Alex Mork, and Tim Ira. We couldn't have done it without you. And considering you only found that you were volunteering the weekend before, you deserve a second thanks. To Butters, thank your truck for me. She was the best volunteer of them all.

Last, I would like to give a special mention to Avicii. Without the awesomeness that is Levels, I'm not sure what I would have played all week. I owe you one.



## ARLO GRUNDBERG

Antifreeze is easily one of my favorite events. It occurs in that magic time after Christmas break when you are glad to be away from the parents, happy to be back at school, but by no means are ready to crack a textbook or pay attention in class. It also involves planning hilarious events for teams that constantly surprise you with their creativity, humor, dedication, and overall awesomeness. Teams run a tight competition for the ability to call themselves Antifreeze champions, but do it all with class (usually).

The events were fun to plan and even better to watch unfold. Sorry for all the Rubik's cubes, they were most definitely my idea. Unlike last year, the weather was near perfect for this year's Antifreeze. Mother Nature saw fit to give us a one-week delay of the terrible and icy wrath she had in store for all Edmontonians and instead gave us four pleasant days. Sure our tent may have almost blown away, the ground was one large ice patch, and I think our chalkboard almost crushed someone at one point, but at least it wasn't -30°.

A huge thanks goes out to everyone who helped us with the events, usually after being asked last minute. If there weren't volunteers helping us set up, tear down, and actually run the events Antifreeze would not have been the week it was. To list all of you, but I know now why Michael Schwake, Jessica Macumber, Shauna Kristoff, Tim Chan, Landon Kulych, Finbarr Timbers, Cody Thorpe, Jocelyn Bury, Bill Pickering, Gavin McAndrews, Courtney Kowal, Saadiq Sumar, Alex Mork, and Tim Ira are.

Shout out to Butters for letting us commandeer his vehicle. Sorry I got a ticket. Equally sorry for the terrible, terrible things I did to the backseat. The biggest thank you goes to the teams involved in Antifreeze this year. If it weren't for your massive amounts of participation and sweet attitudes, this event would have been pretty terrible. I hope you managed to have some fun during the week and that you'll be back next year. Thanks to the Programming & Venues Department, and the rest of 2-900 who had to put up with us.

And, as always, thanks to Avicii for providing us with the genius that is Levels.



## DAVID MCBEAN

Antifreeze was epic. Being a participant last year was one of the highlights of my University experience. How often do you get to run around campus wearing a red flannel onesie or get to your favourite Fine Young Cannibals track on SUBstage? This year I had the privilege of being part of the team that organized AntiFreeze which turned out to be as amazing of an experience. Some highlights include: watching teams get basic math questions wrong at Break the Ice, trying to not laugh as teams were tearing up while drinking large slurpees in Brain Freeze, hearing Avicii-Levels 19 times in 4 days, seeing some hilarious and original dance moves at Happy Feet, having beers with teams while wearing a yeti suit, again trying not to laugh while teams were struggling with License to Chill clues, seeing some teams plough through other teams' sleds in the Snow Dogs race, and helping coordinate a twist competition while DJing the Antifreeze afterparty. Although there were some stressful times, (who knew how annoying moving 80 bleeping tires was?), the amount of energy and fun teams put into this event was astronomical. My definite number one highlight was meeting tons of new people from all over campus and seeing everybody having a great time together. The amount of spirit each team had was inspiring and I am delighted to see this event grow and grow each year and hope most teams return to participate. Thanks for to all of the amazing volunteers that helped make this happen, Brennan and Arlo for all of the great teamwork, Jen Wanke for holding everything together when times were tough, and to all of the teams for the good times and good laughs!





# OF THE U OF A GEBALL GAME FEBRUARY 3 2012

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## UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA STUDENTS' UNION

## 2012 - 2013 EVENTS

## WEEK OF WELCOME | SEPT 5-8, 2012

WWW.SU.UALBERTA.CA/WOW | WOW@SU.UALBERTA.CA

There's no better way to test the University's waters—or dive back in—than the Students' Union's annual Week of Welcome! Come out and celebrate by attending fun events throughout the week! Activities include: Pancake Breakfast, Beer Gardens, Movie Nights, Clubs Fair, Taste of the U, Live Shows and the Mainstage Concert.

## CAMPUS CUP | NOV 23-25, 2012

WWW.SU.UALBERTA.CA/CAMPUSCUP | CAMPUSCUP@SU.UALBERTA.CA

Ever wanted to hit your professor in the face? This could be your chance! Sign up for the campus-wide dodgeball tournament, the 4th Annual Campus Cup. Students, staff and faculty face off in this three day tournament for the chance to be crowned champion and win our really big trophy. Registration opens in October, so don't wait! This event fills up fast!

## SU CHRISTMAS PARTY FOR KIDS | DEC 7, 2012

More than 300 kids from high-needs Edmonton schools will be visiting SUB for a day of cookies, caroling, crafts, and Santa Claus! Help out by leading a group of kids or organizing activities. Free Santa hat!

## ANTIFREEZE | JAN 7-11, 2013

WWW.SU.UALBERTA.CA/ANTIFREEZE | ANTIFREEZE@SU.UALBERTA.CA

Build a team to compete for prizes and glory in the first week of winter term! Collect points through various team activities and catch the Yeti! Registration for this legendary campus event opens in late 2012!

## VOLUNTEER FOR EVENTS!

Want to volunteer for any of the above events? Just send an email to the Student Programming Coordinator at [spc@su.ualberta.ca](mailto:spc@su.ualberta.ca)





# Arts & Culture

**Arts & Culture Editor**

Madeline Smith

**Phone**

780.492.7052

**Email**

arts@gateway.ualberta.ca

**Volunteer**

A&amp;C meetings Wednesdays at 4 p.m. in 3-04 SUB.

## social intercourse

COMPILED BY **Alana Willerton**  
READY TO GET CRUNK

### Love Like This Tour

Featuring Michael Stagliano  
With Laura Swankey  
Friday, Feb. 3 at 7:30 p.m.  
Avenue Theatre (9030 118 Ave.)  
\$13.50 at yeglive.ca

Fresh off his season of *The Bachelor Pad* and *The Bachelorette* before that, Michael Stagliano is popping back in the limelight again as an aspiring musician. Performing an acoustic set of songs made available on iTunes last year, this is Stagliano's big chance to prove he doesn't need reality television to make it in the big bad world of entertainment. Whether or not he'll be successful is yet to be determined, but we can all say we were there when he gave it a shot.

### Moving Along

Written by Chris Craddock  
Directed by Bradley Moss  
Starring Chris Craddock  
Runs Tuesday, Feb. 7 – Sunday, Feb. 26 at 8 p.m.  
Roxy Theatre (10708 124 St.)  
\$16.75 at tixonthesquare.ca

Performing while strapped to an electric chair is certainly not the most conventional stage setup, but it's a critical aspect of the latest play to hit the Roxy Theatre's main stage. Fascinated audiences from across the country have been following this award-winning play, with Chris Craddock delivering rapid monologues about his past while strapped to an electric chair. Focusing on both hilarious and heartbreaking stories about his past and present relationships, the result is a night of theatre unlike anything you'll see again.

### Sleeping Beauty

Written and directed by Julia Leigh  
Starring Emily Browning, Rachael Blake and Ewen Leslie  
Garneau Theatre (8712 109 St.)  
Runs Friday, Feb. 3 – Thursday, Feb. 9 at 9 p.m.  
\$8 admission

Forget the whimsical tale of *Sleeping Beauty* brought to life by Disney. This take on the childhood classic is a far cry from the princess story we came to know and love as young children. This version adopts a much bolder approach as *Sleeping Beauty* takes the form of Lucy (Emily Browning), a college student who enters into the world of sex work. A bold and risqué film, this definitely isn't the same *Sleeping Beauty* that made you dream of becoming a princess waiting for your prince charming.

### Art: Creation of Culture Rather Than Consumer of Culture

Presented by U of A International Week 2012  
With Lindsay Ruth Hunt  
Wednesday, Feb. 1 at 4 p.m.  
International House Meeting Room (U of A)

The politics of art and culture are alive and well at this interactive theatre workshop where participants examine the ways that art can resist consumer culture in the modern world. Part of the U of A's 2012 International Week, with a number of speakers, films and concerts, the workshop draws on practices like Theatre of the Oppressed, art and activism, political theatre and interventionist art. Participants get a taste of the theme of the week, Living Democracy, as they leave with increased awareness of the production of art and the role it plays in democracy, activism and political resistance.



SAM BROOKS

## Chris Millar transforms paint and pop culture into artistic philosophy

### ART PREVIEW

### The Untimely Transmogrification of the Problem

CREATED BY > Chris Millar  
CURATED BY > Nancy Tousley  
WHEN > Exhibit runs until Sunday, Apr. 29  
WHERE > Art Gallery of Alberta (2 Sir Winston Churchill Square)  
HOW MUCH > \$8 gallery admission

**Alana Willerton**

ARTS &amp; CULTURE STAFF • @ALANAWILLERTON

Looking at one of Chris Millar's paintings for the first time, it's difficult to decipher what you're seeing. At first glance, it's just a chaotic jumble of images, slogans and words. But upon closer inspection, you begin to notice things — faces, cartoons, pop culture references — each item carefully selected to fit into an intrinsic narrative thought up in bits and pieces by Millar, and made almost entirely out of layers of paint.

A collection of nine paintings and two sculptures, *The Untimely Transmogrification of the Problem* is more than just the Calgary artist's latest work. It's a mini-retrospective of his life, a collection that's been eight years in the making — a lengthy production process that arises not by choice, but necessity. Each painting and sculpture takes anywhere from a few weeks to several months to complete, as Millar applies layer upon layer of paint onto a sheet of plastic, slowly crafting a 3D image. The finished product is deceiving, admits guest curator Nancy Tousley, as the use of masking to create edges on the surface creates the illusion of a collage.

"People look at it and they think that he's made a collage — that he's cut out existing images and then pasted them on a surface," says Tousley, who has followed Millar's work for years as an arts journalist. "You can see why they might think that, but it's all done with paint."

But no matter what Millar's projects come to look like in the end, they start first and foremost with a story. The process of creating the narratives, which Millar likens to a "really slow-paced improv sketch" starts off with an initial idea and characters, to which Millar slowly adds as he works. Never pre-determining the ending, it's not uncommon for Millar's last step of a project to be his initial idea, as is the case with *370H55V*, the exhibition's largest sculpture and Millar's biggest creation to date.

"It's funny, when you think of doodling, usually you think of drawing something on a notepad when you're on the phone or in class. But I kind of see this as sculptural doodling," muses Millar. "It's not really based around some big, bold concept — it's just me using my hands. I think maybe when you don't have an outcome in mind, it's when you get some of the most bizarre outcomes."



The stories behind many of Millar's pieces might easily be described as bizarre, to say the least. With narrative themes ranging from spoofs of the sitcom *Frasier* to the creation of a fictitious heavy metal band called Face Spider, Millar's work reflects an imagination that just won't quit. While these pieces evoke the bright, fantastical feel that so much of Millar's work embodies, there are also more sombre pieces, stories inspired by personal revelations that Millar himself has difficulty talking about.

"The subject matter is all over the place. (Tousley) sums it up by saying the work is about 'human folly,' which I would say is a totally keen way of describing it," Millar says. "Humans make mistakes and try to succeed in their tasks or lives, but there's just something very human when they fail. I think there is beauty in failure. So although these are not artistic failures, I think they represent some personal failures of the people playing out the stories. They also represent a lot of people making art or trying to be creative and falling short and feeling artistically impotent."

Millar's work is littered with both subtle and obvious suggestions of these ideas, though it may be difficult to find them at first glance. Each piece in the exhibit is so wrought with detail that handheld magnifying glasses are made available for those who want a closer look. It's an important addition to the exhibit, since it's impossible to fully grasp the details of the paintings and sculptures until you've seen them up close with your own eyes.

Even when you do, the risk of losing the story in the muddle of images, figurines and references is all too real. Millar himself admits that some of his vision may get lost in translation when people view the exhibit for the first time. As for the curator, Tousley believes that there's a clear story inside each work that makes up *The Untimely Transmogrification of the Problem* — it simply requires a little imaginative thinking on our part to see it.

"It's about the way we live and the way we relate to each other as people," Tousley says. "In some cases, these are very foolish people running around doing very crazy things, but in the end, there is the suggestion that we are redeemed by the power of the human imagination. And that's what we really see at work in here."



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SUPPLIED: MICHAEL PENG

# Complexity and controversy for Samuel Beckett's *Godot*

**THEATRE PREVIEW**

## Waiting for Godot

**WHEN** Runs Thursday, Feb. 2  
Saturday, Feb. 11 at 8 p.m.,  
2 p.m. matinées on Sunday,  
no show Monday, Feb. 6

**WHERE** TransAlta Arts Barns  
(10330 84 Ave.)

**WRITTEN BY** ▶ Samuel Beckett  
**DIRECTED BY** ▶ Chris Bullough  
**STARRING** ▶ Nathan Cuckow, Farren  
Timoteo, Glenn Nelson,  
George Szilagy and Ty Hatt

**HOW MUCH** ▶ \$19 at the Fringe Theatre  
box office or  
[fringetheatre.ca](http://fringetheatre.ca)

**Richard LaRose**  
ARTS & CULTURE WRITER

Samuel Beckett's controversial *Waiting for Godot* hasn't seen the lights of a professional Edmonton theatre in 40 years. Its debut in the 1950s caused an uproar among European audiences, and some in the UK tried to ban it. But the controversy surrounding the famous play is as difficult to describe as the content itself.

The production follows two derelict companions, Estragon and Vladimir, as they pace and converse, remove bowler hats, shake them out and put them back on throughout the two-act

play — all while awaiting the arrival of a certain unknown Godot. Often, one of the companions forgets what they are doing, and must be reminded by the other that they can't leave: they're waiting for Godot.

In the decades since its debut, critics and scholars have presented a variety of arguments about the play's deeper meaning. Does *Godot* represent God? Time? Death? Or does he symbolize something all of us share: an inability to see past our own hang-ups and move on with our lives when something gets in the way?

"(Estragon and Vladimir) are on the precipice of change, of discovering something about themselves, and they just don't want to go there," explains director Chris Bullough. "They're waiting for someone else to change their lives, and it's frustrating. It's so ridiculous and tragic because it's true — it's what we do. I think as a population we distract ourselves from these questions, and Beckett puts it right out there for everyone to see."

Certain elements of the play might not seem as controversial now as they once were: the characters' frequent urinations and the discussion about post-mortem erections seem tame in today's media culture. But the play has retained its controversial nature by asking deeper questions about the nature of our existence on earth.

"What's really controversial is that it forces you to look inside yourself. I don't think that's a comfortable

place for us as a society — we don't go there," Bullough says. "(Beckett) does what few artists can ever do: he puts a piece of his soul up there. He starts from a place that other writers barely even touch. He's plumbing the depths of his own soul."

"You don't usually go for a night of entertainment to look inside yourself. That's the last reason you go to the theatre. You don't want to have to stare into your own demons."

Yet there's more to the play than a story of two sad, lost souls waiting for Godot. The production was originally billed as a tragicomedy, and Bullough says his interpretation retains the play's humorous aspects.

"What the audience can expect is a good time," he says. "I think it's going to be funny. We're also trying to be really simple in our approach to it. We're not trying to put anything on it. We're trying to make sense of it without being flashy."

And although the subject matter behind *Waiting for Godot* is deep and possibly disturbing, Bullough acknowledges a light touch is key when it comes to parsing any kind of dramatic "message."

"You could be hit over the head with a bunch of truisms, but you don't come to the theatre for that to happen. You want to be entertained and you want to be moved, and preaching at someone for two and a half hours is not the way to do that."

**ALBUM REVIEW**



**Old Time Machine/  
Old Cabin**  
*Old Time Machine/Old Cabin Split EP*  
File Under: Music

**Cody Gretzinger**  
ARTS & CULTURE WRITER

The new split EP by Ryan McNally and Kyle Cashen of Old Time Machine and Jona Barr of Old Cabin explores the winter blues using nothing more than a handful of vintage equipment, thorough knowledge of folk and blues musical arrangements and their experiences in Yukon winters. The collaboration results in a surprising musical depth in the EP, given that the album is only 14 minutes long. Perhaps the length is fitting for the subject, since most

would probably choose a 14-minute winter over a full seasonal.

Old Time Machine starts the album off with "Sun Burns Out," an upbeat guitar and lyrical serenade. McNally strings together dynamic rhythms with his gentle rhymes and low voice, singing: "Afternoon / Bottle of wine / Looks like roses / About a quarter to nine." Cashen contributes to the song with simple drum backbeats and subtle electric filler, creating dynamic

soundscapes that sound like slowly passing winter days.

Old Cabin wraps up the EP with "New Flashing Lights," a sombre tune about longing for better days. Background guitar wails and reverberated background noise accompany Barr's dry and gentle crooning: "Each day is a new day / Sometimes not so much fun." The melancholy feeling reaches its pinnacle by the end of the album, through Barr's eloquent layering of sad sounds and unquestionable songwriting capabilities.

*Old Time Machine/Old Cabin Split EP* is an interesting find, whether or not you understand the experience of a Canadian winter. Both parties complement each other with startling similarity in style and temperament, and after this short offering, we can only hope they might grace us with a full album next time.





JULIANNA DAMER

## Art with a critical look at the consequences of waste

### ART PREVIEW

#### Discards: Continuity in Disgrace

**WHEN** ➤ Exhibit runs until Saturday, Feb. 25

**WHERE** ➤ Harcourt House Arts Centre (10215 112 St.)

**CREATED BY** ➤ Griffith Aaron Baker

**Kevin Pinkoski**

ARTS & CULTURE STAFF

In a world of commonality, artist Griffith Aaron Baker hopes to expose the uniqueness of everyday materials. While Baker has worked with everything from bottle caps to plastic six-pack rings, his current exhibition, *Discards: Continuity in Disgrace*, explores the nearly obsolete compact disc.

"I wanted to do a complete examination of the CD

More than 4,000 CDs have been melted, cut or bent to create a work Baker hopes will get people to think more how they use everyday objects. The show isn't about changing the world or saving the environment, Baker explains, but instead getting people to really consider the implications of their everyday habits.

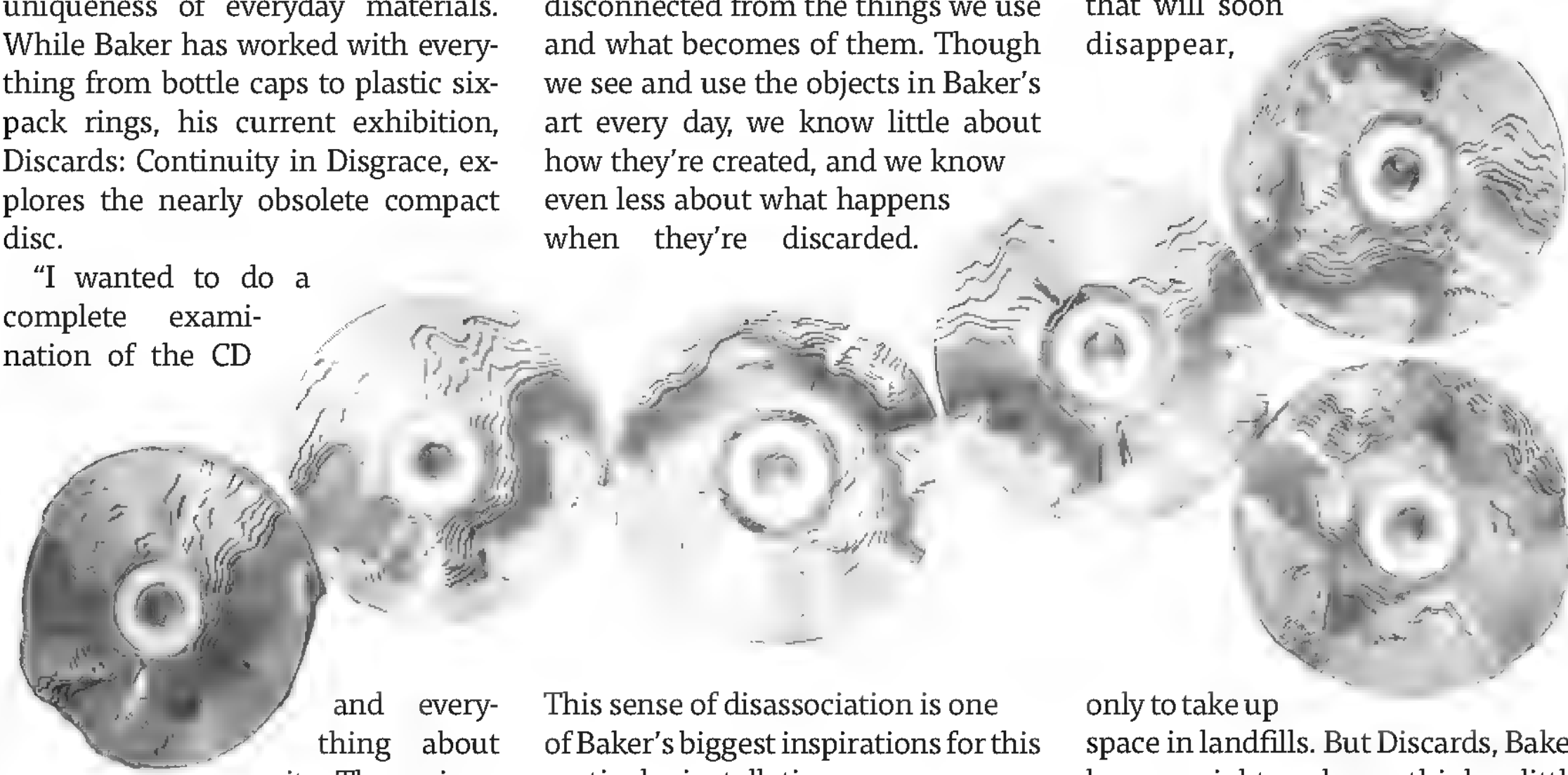
"Maybe someone comes to the show and thinks a little more before buying something that they are just going to throw out anyway. Maybe someone thinks about using another option that produces less waste. Maybe someone thinks a bit more about buying something that's a bit better quality, that will last longer, or serve multiple uses."

Baker's art reflects how we are all disconnected from the things we use and what becomes of them. Though we see and use the objects in Baker's art every day, we know little about how they're created, and we know even less about what happens when they're discarded.

exhibit pokes fun at the idea of endless progress and technology, with a specific criticism aimed at the Futurist movement, an Italian group in the 20th century that argued progress and technology were directly connected.

"They saw an increase in technology as a key part of creating the best possible world," Baker explains. "But the group never understood the effects that technology could have on the world. They had no concern for what kind of pollution their ideas would cause, nor did they even live long enough to see what would happen when technology was embraced across the world."

Thanks to this so-called progress, Baker believes the CD is something that will soon disappear,



and everything about it. There is a lot that people don't know about either how an object is made, or how an object is actually used," Baker says. "Everyone puts a CD in a CD player, but no one really looks at it under a microscope."

Currently on display at the Harcourt House Arts Centre, Baker's work showcases seven of his installations, all featuring compact discs that have been manipulated in different ways.

This sense of disassociation is one of Baker's biggest inspirations for this particular installation.

"I was really inspired by garbage dumps," Baker says enthusiastically. "Everyone knows about them, but no one really goes to a dump. We don't really know what goes on there, and what things start to look like when they are there."

Baker believes this ignorance of our own consumer production cycle allows us to disregard the things we use and how we use them. His

only to take up space in landfills. But *Discards*, Baker hopes, might make us think a little more about the consequences of our consumption before we're left with the task of explaining the relevance of the CD to future generations.

"The next generation probably won't even be able to wrap their heads around the idea of a compact disc," Baker says. "I hope to have captured the uniqueness of the CD before it just becomes another piece of ambiguous history."

## fashion streeters

COMPILED AND PHOTOGRAPHED BY **Julianna Damer**

**Trevor Aryatuzoora**

BUSINESS III



**GATEWAY:** ➤ Describe what you're wearing.

**TREVOR:** ➤ I just randomly put things together. The weather gets warm and cold, so I just make sure I have enough layers on to take me through the day and to stay warm and comfortable.

**GATEWAY:** ➤ What's your favourite thing you have on?

**TREVOR:** ➤ My boxers — I'm kidding! I guess it would be this denim shirt because I can put it on during the summer and the winter.



Check out [thegatewayonline.ca/fashionstreeters](http://thegatewayonline.ca/fashionstreeters) for more photos.





"It's just one of those days when you don't wanna wake up, Everything is fucked, everybody sucks, You don't really know why, But you want to justify rippin' someone's head off"

-LIMP BIZKIT,  
"BREAK STUFF" (2000)

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## Wiseau's cinematic travesty draws droves to the Garneau

### FILM PREVIEW

#### *The Room*

WHEN > Friday, Feb. 3 at 11 p.m.

WHERE > Garneau Theatre (8712 109 St.)

WRITTEN BY > Tommy Wiseau

DIRECTED BY > Tommy Wiseau

STARRING > Tommy Wiseau, Juliette Danielle and Greg Sestero

HOW MUCH > \$8 at the door

#### Kory Orban

ARTS & CULTURE STAFF

The first Friday of every month, a crowd converges on the Garneau Theatre, filing into the hall to watch a movie that's been called one of the worst films ever made. *The Room* is known as a terrible movie, but its cult following makes its regular features at the Metro Cinema hugely popular events.

While it may not be as notorious as *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*, in a similar fashion, *The Room* inspires audience members to throw props at the screen, talk back to the characters and yell out their favourite lines. Some don long black wigs and red dresses to imitate the characters, and one attendee at the Garneau sometimes comes dressed as a giant spoon, a reference to a bizarre prop that appears frequently in the background despite

having nothing to do with the plot.

*The Room* is known for the dubious honour of being stupendously bad from start to finish. The acting is forced, the writing is terrible, the music is laughable and the plot doesn't make any sense. The film has been popularly dubbed "the *Citizen Kane* of bad movies," and as its popularity shows, it's kind of an accomplishment.

**"(Wiseau) has hit a niche that many people have tried, and he succeeded. Regardless of what you want to say about serious cinema or not, it's just entertaining cinema."**

PETE HARRIS  
THEATRE MANAGER/PROGRAMMER, METRO CINEMA

"It's on the old adage that a lot of people say: it's so bad that it's almost good," Metro Cinema theatre manager and programmer Pete Harris says. "(Director Tommy Wiseau) is serious to media when he is interviewed that it was a serious film, and yet everyone comes and it's just such bad acting and the plot is so threadbare.

"It's an 88-minute film, and it holds: people are still laughing as much as they were in the beginning."

### ALBUM REVIEW



#### ZZBRA *ZZBRA: The Original Motion Picture Soundtrack* Camobear Records

Ramneek Tung  
ARTS & CULTURE WRITER

Back in 1997, Moka Only and Evil Ebenezer were set to make their acting debut in Stuey Kubrick's jungle adventure epic *ZZBRA*. Unfortunately, Kubrick pulled a Coppola and went over budget, forcing production to shut down. Heartbroken, Kubrick decided to destroy the filmed material, but emcees Moka Only and Evil Ebenezer somehow managed to salvage the soundtrack. Now 15 years later, they present us with the music

to the film that never was.

That's the fictional premise behind *ZZBRA: The Original Motion Picture Soundtrack*, a hip-hop concept album. It's an intriguing idea, but it's not exactly promising: these albums are rarely fully realized and often result in half-assed efforts at maintaining a theme. And while Moka Only and Evil Ebenezer fail to maintain their chosen jungle motif on a few tracks, the majority of the album

sees the rappers deep in the jungle, giving us one of the strangest and most compelling hip-hop albums in recent memory.

Drenched in animal noises, un-earthly funk loops and grainy percussion, *ZZBRA* is the first compelling hip-hop album of 2012. With an opening that sounds like a biblical epic, Moka Only and Evil Ebenezer, obviously influenced by various incarnations of the iconic character Tarzan, drop wild kingdom references and non sequiturs over Stuey Kubrick's eclectic musical palette. And while "Running Back" and the adultery-themed "Number One" are completely out of place on this album, they're just quibbles on a psychedelic record that offers something fresh and vital to hip-hop in a genre increasingly drenched in generic pop music.



# Victoria's Current Swell advances to new frontiers

Following their PEAK Performance Project windfall, the band is branching out and taking their sound outside Canada's borders

## MUSIC PREVIEW

### Current Swell

**WITH** > Charlie Winston  
**WHEN** > Friday, Feb. 3 at 6 p.m.  
**WHERE** > Starlite Room (10030 102 St.)  
**HOW MUCH** > \$24.75 at  
 primeboxoffice.com

**Kate Black**

ARTS & CULTURE WRITER ■ @BLAHBLAHBLACK

"We will not relax / Relaxing's just another way for saying you're getting old," croons Current Swell's Scott Stanton. The lyrics, from a song on the band's latest release *Long Time Ago*, make up the guiding sentiment for the entire group, which has no intention of slowing down after a whirlwind year of making music and touring.

The release of their fourth album in October of last year catalyzed a chain reaction of achievements in the band's career. In November, they claimed the grand prize of \$100,500 from the PEAK Performance Project, an intensive week-long contest that aims to foster the growth of British Columbia artists. After a few short weeks of rest at the beginning of January, the band is off on a Canada-wide tour backing British singer-songwriter Charlie Winston. Over the phone on the first morning of the tour, Stanton explains that the band's recent success has allowed them to graduate from taking their first steps into the Canadian music scene to cultivating a broader



SUPPLIED: SHANE DERINGER

international fanbase.

"Every tour that we do we notice that it's always positive, it's always growing, the audience is always getting bigger ... We always discuss that our band is just doing little baby steps. But over that last little while it's been more of a taller step. It's a lot bigger, and that's really nice. It just makes us work hard," he says.

*Long Time Ago* captures a warm,

comfortable folk feel, punctuated by soulful harmonies and banjo melodies. This sound isn't new to the band, but it's more consistent throughout this album, a slight departure from the surf-rock atmosphere of their previous work. But the new roots direction isn't an entirely deliberate choice — it simply reflects the maturation of the band.

"(The development of our sound)

wasn't intentional, I think it was just us growing," Stanton says. "I think our first record was written so long ago, when we were young — fresh out of high school. Now we're older guys, but we have a completely different lifestyle from when we first started writing music.

"There was no conscious effort (to create a new sound) ... the only conscious effort was making a

cohesive record."

Stanton describes the intricacies of making music from album-making to touring with an obvious passion and enthusiasm for his craft. His tone shifts as he reflects on the heavier subjects of the album, namely the loss of the band's close friend, the inspiration for "Brad's Song." He dwells on his words, reminiscing about the young life lost to a spinal injury. It's "things like that," Stanton says, that bring forth the kind of personal change and growth inevitably replicated in songwriting.

"It seems that when we recorded our first album, we didn't really have a worry in the world. We were just a bunch of surf bums travelling around the globe, writing music, not really trying to be a band," he says.

"We've become different people from when we were younger: adopting different values, falling in love. Just having to live not like a kid and trying to focus on our music."

As for what the rest of 2012 might have in store for Current Swell, Stanton says the band is already itching to return to the studio and begin work on their fifth album. But whatever direction the band takes, he makes it clear that the final destination is still up to them.

"We never really let people tell us what we should do, Because I don't really care what people tell us to do," he laughs. "I write music because I'm passionate about it and I perform music because I'm passionate about it. I'm not going to do it for someone else, and I don't think anyone in the band is going to do it for someone else."

# Heavy-handed environmentalism tarnishes *Surviving Progress*

## FILM REVIEW

### Surviving Progress

**WHEN** > Now playing  
**WRITTEN BY** > Mathieu Roy and Harold Crooks  
**DIRECTED BY** > Mathieu Roy and Harold Crooks  
**STARRING** > Stephen Hawking, Margaret Atwood and Jane Goodall

**Cody Gretzinger**

ARTS & CULTURE WRITER

Redefining what it means to "gimmick" the public into believing something, *Surviving Progress* manages to force a point while disgracing the documentary genre with its presence. With bedazzling scenery, complex musical accompaniment, big-name interviews and a jumble of loosely-tied theories, the film aims to stimulate. But it ultimately ends up being a disappointing eco-propaganda doomsday documentary.

**Rather than letting the audience watch the interviews, the people onscreen look straight into the camera and give a speech ... audiences have no time to reflect on what's actually being said, since they're carted from one big idea to the next in a dizzying spectacle.**

Based on Ronald Wright's bestseller *A Short History of Progress*, the film centres itself on exploring the notion of "progress traps." Throughout human history, the filmmakers argue, unabated progress has always led to



disaster. One such example they provide is the rise and demise of hunting in our evolutionary history: Man hunts mammoth, Man hunts 10 mammoths with a spear, Man realizes he can chase one thousand mammoths over a cliff, mammoths go extinct and Man starves.

But Wright's thesis isn't just about history: it's about the types of progress traps currently facing humankind, such as environmental degradation and financial collapse. *Surviving Progress* attempts to showcase such traps by providing a dizzying array of imagery, emotional music and interviews with a dozen experts in various fields, including heavyweights David Suzuki, Margaret Atwood and Jane Goodall.

While some of the interviewees provide fascinating insights into their areas of study, others seem like inappropriate choices due to

their fairly loose relevance to one another. At one moment a doomsday Wall Street economist preaches to the audience, transitioning to a child lamenting the destruction of the rainforest and moving onto some guy who runs car ride excursions through China.

If the common thread between these figures is painfully hard to find, the imagery certainly doesn't help either. The film begins by observing chimps, then begins to move at a blinding pace, taking the audience to all sorts of random locations: apartments, forests, space, oceans, classrooms and factories — all without any logical progression. The continuous battery of quick scene changes leaves much to be desired, however stunning the scenery may be.

This cinematic mash-up would be a little less aggravating if the film managed to be a

little less manipulative. Rather than letting the audience watch the interviews, the people onscreen look straight into the camera and give a speech. In addition to the artificial and unsettling eye contact, audiences have no time to reflect on what's actually being said, since they're carted from one big idea to the next in a dizzying spectacle. The musical score only serves to compound the manipulative effect with obvious emotional cues to direct what audiences should feel when they hear what the interview subjects have to say.

*Surviving Progress* attempts to reveal the progress traps of our civilization, but falls short with its disjointed execution and rushed experience. Once the hype surrounding producer Martin Scorsese dies down, the film will surely spend the rest of its days rotting in the National Film Board vaults.



# Whimsical Mikado gets a playfully inventive update

Edmonton Opera presents a modern, unconventional twist on the classic comic opera by Gilbert and Sullivan



OPERA PREVIEW

## The Mikado

**WHEN** > Shows Saturday, Feb. 4, Tuesday, Feb. 7 and Thursday, Feb. 9 at 7:30 p.m.  
**WHERE** > Jubilee Auditorium (11455 87 Ave.)  
**LIBRETTO BY** > W.S. Gilbert  
**MUSIC BY** > Arthur Sullivan  
**DIRECTED BY** > Robert Herriot  
**STARRING** > John Avey, Andriana Chuchman and Scott Scully  
**HOW MUCH** > Starting at \$50 at ticketmaster.ca

**Karla Comanda**  
ARTS & CULTURE WRITER

It may be more than a century old, but *The Mikado* is moving into the future. For the second production of the 2011-2012 season, Edmonton Opera is making Gilbert and Sullivan's comic opera into a fresh, modern production. Set in the town of Titipu, *The Mikado* — meaning Emperor of Japan — is a comic opera about young lovers Nanki-Poo and Yum-Yum and their desire to be together. But as love stories go, things are inevitably messy, and as more characters come into play, the situation between the two only gets increasingly complicated. The biggest twist on the opera is

what director Robert Herriot calls “fusion production” — a more modern take on *The Mikado*. Japanese street fashion, the main inspiration behind the costumes in the production, serves as a jumping-off point for integrating modern culture and technology into the opera along with traditional Japanese elements. “(*The Mikado*) was the perfect vehicle to update,” Herriot says. “The company felt that we should try a new direction and asked me if I was willing to undertake it, and I said, ‘Absolutely.’ It’s a different way of thinking for me ... If you see *The Mikado* traditionally, it’s just kimono after kimono after kimono... it’s the same after a while. This way, we were able to start from the ground and really make it an original piece. “That’s the beauty of this kind of piece,” adds soprano Andriana Chuchman, who plays Yum-Yum. “You can update it tastefully.” While *The Mikado* is first and foremost a comedy, Herriot and Chuchman note the layers beneath the laughs, with elements that poke fun at the societal hierarchy of the Victorian era and a light-hearted examination of death. “It’s not a deep opera,” Herriot acknowledges. “However, that being said, I think there are many, many facets to certainly this production. There’s great physical comedy in this piece and there’s great acting comedy. There are also some really heartfelt moments that are quite serious and

that deal with things like despair, great inner sadness and loneliness. I think those are very poignant moments in the piece that are very important, because they actually give us the whole spectrum of human emotions.” Like the entire opera, examining naïve teenage girl Yum-Yum reveals layers to her seemingly shallow personality. Chuchman, who has performed the opera a number of times before, says that while Yum-Yum is not a really deep character, that doesn’t mean she’s dumb. “I don’t like to think of her as a ditz at all,” she says. “She doesn’t just jump into things. She has a sense of self-worth, and she knows that she can use her looks to get ahead ... She will jump on opportunities and use everything she has to get ahead. She’s smart in that sense, but she’s young, so (naïveté) comes with the territory.” Gilbert and Sullivan’s trademark outlandish comedy combined with Edmonton Opera’s updated, vibrant staging, offers entertainment and accessibility in the seemingly stuffy world of opera. With the addition of modern technology and Edmonton in-jokes to the 19th-century opera, this production makes the opera stage a little less intimidating. “It’s not brain surgery,” Herriot says. “It’s accessible because it’s something new. And even if you absolutely hate the music and you hate the story, at least you get to look at this incredible world, which is kind of cool.”



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VICE-PRESIDENT (ADVANCEMENT):  
Input from the Community

The search for Vice-President (Advancement) is currently underway. In consultation with the former Chair of the Board of Governors, Mr. Brian Howdecker, President Samarasekera asked that an Advisory Search Committee be established to advise on the selection of a Vice-President (Advancement).

UAPPOL provides that members of the university community have an opportunity to contribute to the search process. Individuals are welcome to express their views on the priorities of Vice-President (Advancement), including current issues, leadership, and the future direction of the Office of Vice-President (Advancement). The Committee invites you to submit your comments and/or suggestions, in confidence, by 4:30 pm, Friday, February 17, 2012 to:

President Indira V. Samarasekera  
c/o Jackie Wright, Secretary to the Advisory Search Committee  
3-1 University Hall, University of Alberta T6G 2J9 email: [jackie.wright@ualberta.ca](mailto:jackie.wright@ualberta.ca)

All submissions shall be in writing and must include a written or email signature. Non-tenured faculty, staff, and students may request that their submission be passed to the committee anonymously.

Responsibility for the administration of the search process is housed in the Office of the President. Membership of the Advisory Search Committee is posted on the President's website: [www.president.ualberta.ca](http://www.president.ualberta.ca)

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# Sports

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Sports meetings Thursdays at 4 p.m. in 3-04 SUB. C'mon by!

## Puck Pandas shut-out UBC in double wins

**HOCKEY ROUNDUP**

**Pandas vs. UBC**

Friday and Saturday  
Jan. 27-28  
Clare Drake Arena

**Rebecca Medel**

SPORTS EDITOR

Identical in score but not so much in how each period played out, the Pandas had two 4-0 victories over the University of British Columbia Thunderbirds last weekend.

For Friday's game, the Pandas came out firing and controlled the game for most of the first period. Pandas forward Monika Moskalski — one of Canada West's top scorers ranked at number 16 — started off Friday's game with a goal 15 minutes into the first period. Moskalski was back on the ice with a vengeance after being out of play with an injury the previous four games. Nicole Pratt also netted a goal to end that period with just over a minute left on the clock.

Head coach Howie Draper said he's got a great team that knows how to pull together.

"We spent the majority of the game down in their end which is really good. But Kaitlyn (Chapman) made some very nice saves for us when we needed them most in that second period that could very well have tied up the game. So it's nice to know that you're strong with your goalie and straight through with your (defence) and through your forwards."

Alannah Kedra swept in two goals about two minutes apart well into the third period to end the game. The third-year forward had her first goal of the season only a few weekends before when the Pandas hosted the University of Calgary Dinos on Jan. 7.

Saturday's game was a different beast with the Pandas only taking the lead in the second period. Kedra helped cement Saturday's win

as well with a rebounded shot in net as the second period came to a close and a final shot on net at 19:41 after Karla Bourke's two goals earlier in the third period. Kedra credited her teammates for setting up the shots.

"I think it just came from our team and just getting our momentum back and with my line mates knowing where I was. I think it was a little bit of luck and my teammates helping me out," Kedra said.

Draper had a bit more praise for the weekend's top scorer. "(Kedra) is a skilled player and we feel that she has the ability to score more goals for us. That's what she needs to do every game, so hopefully this is the start of that."

The last place 1-17-2 UBC played aggressively, even slamming into net minder Chapman when she stepped out of net and taking her to the ground, but Moskalski said they were expecting it.

"They're pretty tough. They've got three girls out of the line-up with concussions, so basically whatever they can do to get their team pumped is what they have to do. And sometimes we do the same. If we're struggling, we've got to get them off their game a little bit. So we were expecting them to be aggressive and I think our girls did what they needed to do," Moskalski said.

This weekend the Pandas have a break from games, resuming in Regina Feb. 11 and 12 for the last weekend of regular season play. And as the second place team in Canada West at 12-3-7, the Pandas have persevered through a season of back-to-back wins sprinkled with overtime losses.

"It's been kind of an up and down season for us. You know everyone is expecting the Pandas to always win but they don't realize that other teams are getting better recruiting and they're just as skilled players as we have. But as long as we believe in ourselves it won't matter until the end," Moskalski said.

The Pandas take a bye this weekend.



SEYED HOSSEIN

### bears basketball

Jan. 27, 2012



66



67

Jan. 28, 2012



64



79

### Bears 10-6

	AB	UofC
FG 1st Half	11-31	9-25
3FG 1st Half	6-18	2-12
FT 1st Half	3-5	9-14
FG 2nd Half	14-31	13-29
3FG 2nd Half	6-14	3-7
FT 2nd Half	1-5	9-13
Total Rebounds	37	40

### Dinos 6-10

	AB	UofC
FG 1st Half	12-29	14-31
3FG 1st Half	1-10	3-9
FT 1st Half	7-13	8-10
FG 2nd Half	11-35	13-29
3FG 2nd Half	2-12	4-11
FT 2nd Half	8-9	10-12
Total Rebounds	37	43

### pandas basketball

Jan. 27, 2012



61



74

Jan. 28, 2012



67



74

### Pandas 11-5

	AB	UofC
FG 1st Half	11-31	15-33
3FG 1st Half	1-6	3-4
FT 1st Half	9-17	7-8
FG 2nd Half	9-27	12-31
3FG 2nd Half	1-6	2-9
FT 2nd Half	10-15	8-12
Total Rebounds	42	40

### Dinos 11-5

	AB	UofC
FG 1st Half	10-30	15-29
3FG 1st Half	1-8	3-6
FT 1st Half	4-5	6-7
FG 2nd Half	10-29	11-26
3FG 2nd Half	3-11	6-13
FT 2nd Half	19-21	7-12
Total Rebounds	39	34



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## Puck Bears at top of their game

### HOCKEY ROUNDUP

#### Bears @ T-Birds

Friday and Saturday, Jan. 27-28  
University of British Columbia

**Rebecca Medel**  
SPORTS EDITOR

Leading Canada West and clinching a playoff spot is all well and good for the Golden Bears hockey squad, but the team has four regular season games to go and after splitting last weekend, needs straight wins to keep that spot.

It was a good start to the weekend for the Green and Gold, who were on the west coast battling the University of British Columbia Thunderbirds. Friday's 3-1 win saw Jordan Hickmott scoring for the Bears in the first five minutes, while Kruse Reddick and Greg Gardner popped in the last two pucks of the night for either side to start off the

third. Saturday was a stalemate for both teams until the T-Birds' Nate Fleming scored in the third to end what could have been Real Cyr's third shut-out of the season finishing off Saturday with a final score of 1-0 for the T-Birds.

Now with a week to recover before heading to Regina on Feb. 10 and 11, the Bears have some time to reflect on past wins and think about how to live up to their golden name. For 10 of the past 11 years the Bears have been CanWest champs, with 2007 being the fall-out year. Within that same time period they've brought home national gold in 2005, 2006 and 2008.

With their 16-6-2 Canada West record, the Bears are now number one in CanWest and number five in the country.

Head coach Stan Marple is interested in focusing on what the team can fix, specifically improving the powerplay, something they've been working on all year.

"We have control over how we

play and how well we play," he said. "Everybody's stepping it up a bit offensively and obviously not everyone has the same role, but I think everyone is starting to accept their role and and flourish with it. We have got to keep improving on our special teams and our powerplay needs to continue to get better."

Part of the success the Bears have had this season is from what Marple sees as improved cohesion between the lines as well as healthy players that has given him the freedom to find the best combinations of players and get the best possible contributions from all four lines.

"We have been very fortunate this year for the most part. At the moment we have a full roster to choose from, so that's a good thing. There's lots of competition for ice time and its difficult making those decisions because we have a lot of players that could play and do well. It's just a matter of finding the best combinations for each weekend."

— With files from Nick Ong

## U of A swim team bring home medals

### SWIMMING REVIEW

#### CanWest Finals

Friday-Sunday, Jan. 27-29  
Kinsmen Sports Centre

**Andrew Jeffrey**  
SPORTS STAFF • @ANDREW\_JEFFREY

Once not considered a serious competitor in the CanWest division, the University of Alberta's swim team has made great strides this season to attain a level of respectability that has alluded them for almost two decades.

This past weekend the three-day Canada West Swimming Championships took place at Kinsmen Sports Centre in Edmonton. The favourites to win the team trophies on both the men's and women's sides were the defending CanWest champions, UBC, and the defending national champions, the University of Calgary.

UBC was able to defend their CanWest crowns by margins of more than 100 points in both the men's and women's rankings. But this year the U of A was able to stay competitive with a third-place finish for the women and a second-place finish for the men, finishing one spot ahead of their rivals at the U of C.

"Really I think everything went as well as it could have," U of A head

coach Bill Humby said.

"You're never going to have it perfect where everyone swims 100 per cent in every race. We've done okay in the past but we really did a great job of getting into the A finals, winning medals, and getting up this morning and swimming really strongly when (we're) tired."

The U of A's top swimmers included former UBC student Erin Miller who won three gold medals and broke a number of CanWest records and team captain Brian Yakiwchuk, who won two gold medals in his final year with the team.

Humby was named coach of the year for the men's side — a deserving honour for a man who has been with the team for the past five and a half years and turned the program around. This is Humby's sixth season in Edmonton and he has put together an all around strong Bears team that's at the highest ranking they've reached in almost two decades. This year marked for the highest finish at the CanWest finals since 1995 for the Green and Gold's male team.

Humby envisioned this kind of success when he joined the team after spending eight and a half years as an assistant coach at the U of C. But at that time the U of A wasn't taken seriously as a contender in swimming. It took Humby until this season to finally change people's opinion of the Bears swim team,

with a defeat of the defending national champions from U of C early in the year and a second-place finish over the weekend.

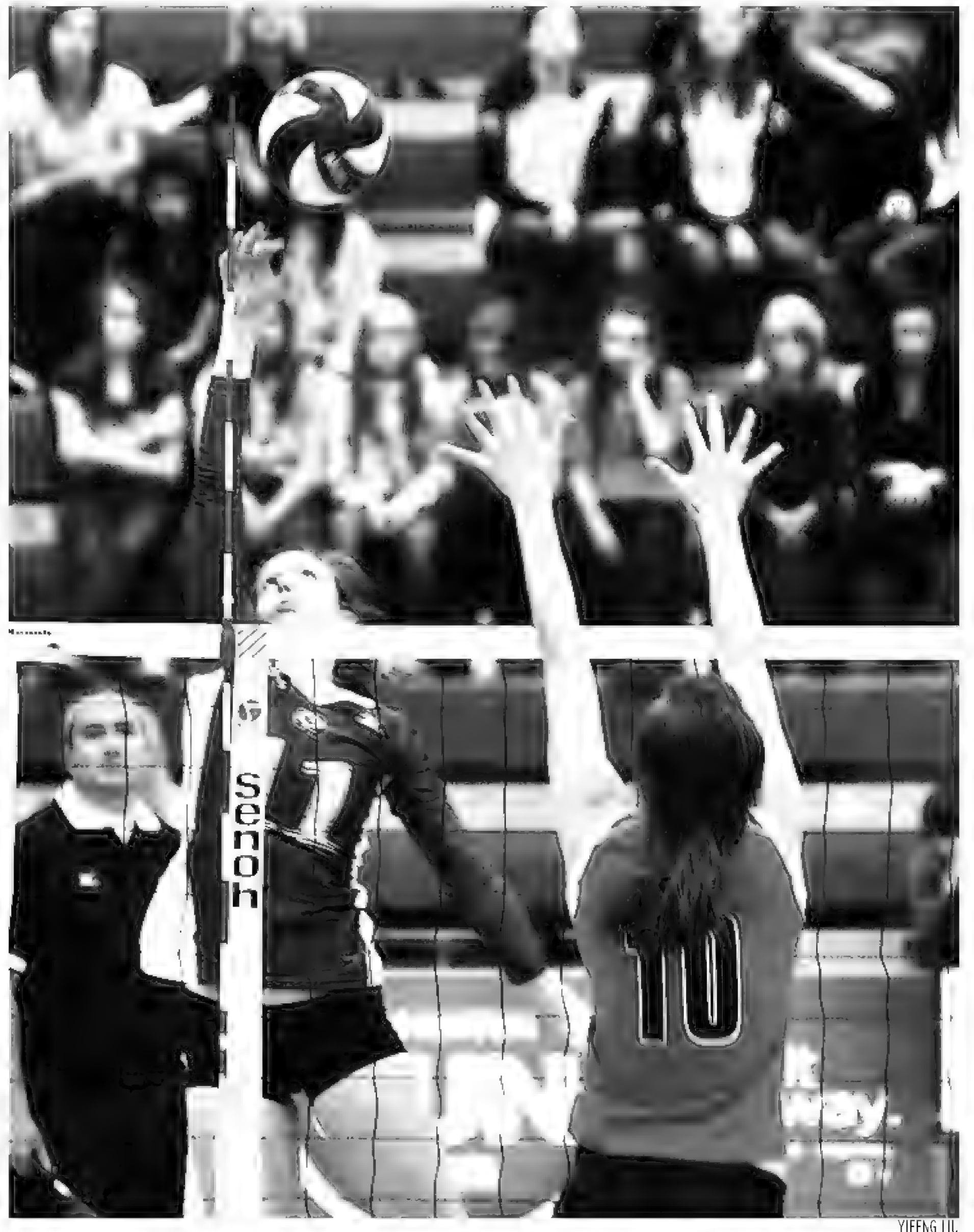
"We've just been saying over the years we do work as hard as (the U of C) does. There's nothing we don't have here that they have. They're both associated with national training centres and I think we've got the same support team here, the same level of coaching, and the university's really good at supporting the team," Humby said.

"The athletes here don't take it for granted what they've got. If they make the team, they're respectful of the fact that they had to earn their spot on the team. They take kind of a pride and an ownership in the team that I'm not sure the other schools quite have. They can be primadonnas, they think they deserve stuff and we don't have that."

The next step for the U of A is looking ahead to another strong showing at the CIS national championships in Montreal, Feb. 23-25.

"I just told the team we've got 24 days, 15 hours and 54 minutes until (national championships). It's a little bit less now but they've got two weeks now where they can make some changes — whether they need to do some hard work, do some technical work or just mentally figure out how to swim our races better, we've got a few things we can change," Humby said.





## Volley Bears and Pandas rock weekend with wins

Bears squeak by against Dinos but points leaders Olmstead and Irvine bring game around to continue four-game win streak

### VOLLEYBALL PREVIEW

#### Bears vs. Cougars

Friday, Feb. 3, 7:30 p.m.  
Saturday, Feb. 4, 6 p.m.  
SCSC

**Jonathan Faerber**  
SPORTS WRITER

The atmosphere was electric at the Saville on Saturday as the volleyball Bears completed a weekend sweep against Calgary to clinch a spot in the Canada West playoffs.

The 3-1 and 3-0 wins were a lot closer than they looked on paper, especially as the Bears trailed the Dinos in the first two sets on Saturday before staging late come-backs to win each set 27-25.

The wins marked the Bears' first home appearance in 2012. With the exception of a poor second set — a 20-25 decision — the Bears dominated play throughout on Friday, winning their three sets 25-18, 25-17, and 25-22.

Saturday's game, however, was a tense affair that kept the crowd on the edge of their seats and then brought them to their feet when the Bears negated a five-point deficit to pull even at 25 in the second set, and then ahead, courtesy of two successive attack errors by the Dinos.

The losses were hard on Calgary, whose starting setter and second in assists Canada-wide, Jay Blankeneau, missed the game due to injury. And although the Dinos' number four position in the Canada West standings guarantees them a post-season berth in playoffs, the weekends' results means they now have little chance of passing the number-three ranked Bears, and no chance at hosting playoffs.

Bears head coach Terry Danyluk, although quick to concede that Blankeneau's absence was felt, noted that the shift in the game dynamic was not always to Alberta's advantage.

"(Playing without Blankeneau) caused them some confusion. Their confusion, I thought, caused us some confusion. It was a

really unconventional system that they were running and we adapted to it at times and at other times we were scrambling too much."

Scrambling, although perhaps harsh, does describe the early minutes of Saturday's match, where the Bears quickly fell behind 3-0 and struggled to adjust to Calgary's offence before Danyluk called a timeout with Alberta trailing 4-9.

Soon afterwards, left and right sides Jay Olmstead and Mitch Irvine, who led in points on Friday with 18 and 11 respectively, began to deliver, with a 15-15 game leveller from Irvine — a deep kill from the back row. Olmstead then provided four successive kills to tie the game first at 22, then 23, and finally 24. Another kill by Irvine to bring the scores level at 25 and two Dino attack errors decided the set in Alberta's favour.

Olmstead, who was once again a game leader with 16 kills, credited an impressive team display for the two wins, noting that the Bears have worked hard since their last home game — their only home loss of the season — to avoid repeating the result.

"Our blocking stability this weekend was a lot better, we also played defence a little bit better around it. It just comes with time," he said. "I think we've just improved as a team a lot."

Danyluk also said he noticed an improvement and emphasized the need to be ready to host the University of Regina Cougars this weekend.

"I think our determination on defence has to improve. Our serving still needs to improve," Danyluk said, referring to Friday's 17 service errors. "We have to find the fine line between serving in and also serving tough enough."

Olmstead added that the Bears' next goal is hosting the playoffs.

"We really want to focus now on getting the highest ranking possible — we've got two weekends left and it's really important that we prepare for those well."

The Bears take on the Regina Cougars this Friday and Saturday at the Saville Community Sports Centre. The games against the Cougars will be the last time the Bears play at home in regular season play.

### VOLLEYBALL PREVIEW

#### Pandas vs. Cougars

Friday, Feb. 3, 6 p.m.  
Saturday, Feb. 4, 7:30 p.m.  
SCSC

**Atta Almasi**  
SPORTS STAFF

After a surprising loss to Canada West newcomer UBC-Okanagan on Jan. 21, the fourth-ranked Pandas volleyball team rebounded in style with a two-game sweep of their arch-rivals the Calgary Dinos last weekend.

"I'm really proud of the team for bouncing back," Pandas head coach Laurie Eisler said. "(The loss to UBC-O) was borderline discouraging and it's easy to get discouraged in this game. This game can really humble you. But, (the players) threw a lot of really hard work at it, were honest with themselves on the things that we have to be better at and it's a work in progress. They stick to themselves and they stick to each other, and that's really all you can ask for."

The Pandas were led by the spectacular play of rookie Alena Omelchenko who had 14 kills on Friday and 22 kills in Saturday's match, both of which were game highs.

"I think we kind of knew from day one what kind of player she is," Eisler said of Omelchenko's play. "And the exciting part is she keeps getting better and better. So it's been awesome to have her with the team and we're excited about the future."

The two victories were made even more special by the fact that they came against the Calgary Dinos. Games against rivals like Calgary are different from games against other CanWest teams, according to Eisler.

"You don't really have to say anything in the team room because you know that (the players are) going to be activated and ready to go and it's one of those weekends you've got circled on your calendar. But there's a lot of familiarity too because they've played a lot together on provincial teams. So you know each other and actually I'd say it's a pretty friendly rivalry, honestly."

Fifth-year middle Caity Buckell agrees with her coach on the different atmosphere of game against rivals.

"Every game in Canada West is important (but) for these games ... Alberta pride's on the line ... They're games that you get up for."

The Pandas, who sit in third in the CanWest standings following their wins over Calgary, clinched one of the conference's seven playoffs spots on Friday, and join fellow CanWesters in the CIS national rankings — the number-one ranked UBC Thunderbirds, number-three Trinity Western Spartans, and number-five Winnipeg Wesmen — as the only other teams to punch their ticket to the post season. Still, the Pandas recognize that clinching home court advantage for the playoffs is better than just getting in.

"I think homecourt advantage is really important especially in Canada West with the amount of travel that you have to do if you are on the road," Eisler said. "We love playing here. We know this place better than anyone else does so I think we have control of our destiny right now ... we've got to play hard and see what we can do."

Next on the docket for the Pandas is a final home weekend against the Regina Cougars who themselves are coming off a two-game sweep of the Heat from UBC-Okanagan, boosting their overall record to 4-12. And with only four games left in their season, the Cougars, who are chasing both the 8-8 Brandon Bobcats and Calgary Dinos for the seventh and final playoff spot, face a must-win scenario when they step onto the court at Saville Friday night.

"You know they're going to be super prepared," Eisler said about Regina. "They're going to know us and be prepared for us. I like playing teams that have a lot on the line because then it's a level playing field because we have a lot on the line too. They're a great team, they had a really tough start to their season but we know they're very athletic and they're experienced so it's going to be a tough opponent."

The Pandas and the Cougars face-off at the Saville Community Sports Centre this weekend, in the last regular season home matches for the Pandas.



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## Francis hopes to change basketball

Matt Hirji

SPORTS STAFF • @MATTHIRJI

On March 17, 1997 Greg Francis made a name for himself.

It was on that momentous day that Francis and his hoop teammates from Fairfield University — one of the smallest Division One schools in the NCAA — took on the powerhouse North Carolina Tar Heels in the first round of March Madness. It was David versus Goliath. And with Francis' help, David almost prevailed.

Playing against future NBA stars Antwan Jamison and Vince Carter, Francis scored 26 points, knocked down eight three-pointers and nearly single-handedly beat the Tar Heels.

Even though North Carolina ultimately defeated the Fairfield Stags in an edge-of-your-seat match, Francis still looks fondly on that game. That's because it was in this game that the young Torontonians finally understood the importance of preparation and sacrifice. But even more importantly, he'd crystallized his legendary status in college basketball lore.

"It was a good night," Francis says. "That was just a really special time, in my senior year, to have that opportunity to go and play in the NCAA tournament. It was everything that it was hyped up to be. (North Carolina was) always going to beat us ... but it was still a surreal experience and something that changed my perspective on the game ... It made me a man."

Fifteen years later, Francis is utilizing the foundational lessons that he gained on that fateful day in 1997. After playing for Team Canada in the 2000 Olympics and having the opportunity to coach the Canadian Junior national team, Francis was hired as the Golden Bears head basketball coach in 2009. It's been here, in the Golden Bears practices, their team meetings and the countless hours of mentorship over the last two seasons that Francis has attempted to give his players the platform to cement their own legacies.

It hasn't been an easy process. After being hired as the Green and Gold's bench boss, Francis was faced with the complicated task of reviving a program that was on the brink of losing its tradition of excellence with the sudden retirement of veteran head coach Don Horwood.

And if it weren't for his experiences as a college athlete, the task at hand would have been that much more difficult. The March Madness game in 1997 gave him the ability to understand the value of hard work



MATT HIRJI

and preparation. It's those values that he's leaned on and imparted to his athletes as he instituted changes to a program to ensure that his athletes are given the greatest opportunity to succeed.

"I felt so prepared in that game against North Carolina. That's the feeling I want my players to have every time they step on the court," Francis says. "I want to be known as a coach that made his players so good that they created a legacy for themselves. The best compliment I can get is that Greg Francis prepared his players so well that they were unstoppable on game night."

As the Bears' bench boss, the stakes are high for Francis. The stakes are even higher than the opportunity to take down one of the greatest college basketball teams ever to take the court. As Francis explains, being the head coach of

the Golden Bears is the opportunity to take a CIS basketball program and use it as a platform to change the way basketball is played in Alberta. And for Francis that would be even more satisfying than knocking down a few more three-pointers and winning that legendary game in 1997.

"I want to leave that legacy. I want to make a name for myself in this province. I want to win championships here, but more than anything I want to influence the way that basketball is played in this city and in this province because of the things we are doing here in my program," Francis says. "I want to change the game, and I want to change it by making a name for these players, because I think they can be a great example for the kids in this province that they can dream big too."

## sports shorts

COMPILED BY Rebecca Medel

### HOOP PANDAS LOSE TO RIVAL DINOS

It wasn't a great weekend for the Pandas basketball squad as they couldn't seem to bring their game to Calgary. Friday saw a 74-61 loss, followed by another loss on Saturday with a few more points on the scoreboard at 74-67.

The losses come on the heels of a five-game winning streak that began Jan. 7 and leave the Pandas and Dinos tied for third spot in Canada West at 11-5 each.

Nicole Clarke was Friday's lead scorer for the Pandas with 16 points but the Pandas trailed by eight points at the end of the first quarter and couldn't quite catch up for the rest of the game.

Saskia Van Ginhoven nabbed 17 points for the Pandas in Saturday's game and the Panda's were able to win the third quarter 26-15, but the Dinos bounced back into the game in the fourth.

This weekend the Pandas are on the road again to take on the Regina Cougars.

### BASKETBALL BEARS JUST SHY OF WIN

In a game that could have gone either way, the hoop Bears were defeated 67-66 by the University of Calgary Dinos last Friday night. Jordan Baker and Daniel Ferguson led the night in points with 24 each and the Bears won the first and third quarters but fell behind in the fourth with the Dinos leading 20-13 in points.

On Saturday Robert Dewar's 16 points were not enough to beat the Dinos and their point-guard Jarred

Ogungbemi-Jackson and his 25 points, and the Bears lost 79-64.

The Bears head to Regina this weekend to take on the Cougars.



FILE PHOTO: MATT HIRJI



# Super Bowl ads could just be the highlight of the night



## Sports Staff

GROUP COMMENTARY

Super Bowl Sunday. Pats and Giants, chips and salsa, beer and wings and, come on, the commercials! Hands down one of the best parts of the Super Bowl, other than the ol' showdown itself, is the ads. The millions of dollars that companies spend on 30 seconds of air-time is the quintessential culmination of having to out-do last year's ad. Sometimes a fail. Sometimes a big win. Here the sports staff pick our favourite Super Bowl ads from years gone by.

### Alex Migdal

A woman dressed in a white tank top and red shorts sprints through a tunnel carrying a hammer while police officers chase her. She reaches a large screen bearing the image of Big Brother and hurls her hammer towards it. The screen flashes, and is followed by an ominous voiceover: "You'll see why 1984 won't be like 1984."

Simple, chilling, and incredibly effective, Apple's legendary 1984 commercial introduced the company's first ever Macintosh computer with the same type of buzz it would enjoy 25 years later. Combining an unforgettable artistic vision with a powerful consumer impact, the commercial rightfully deserves its place in the all-time greatest Super Bowl commercials hall of fame.

### Atta Almasi

Predicting the future is dangerous business. A Super Bowl commercial from couple of years ago played on just this concept. Two guys were talking at work, and one of them had a snowglobe he claimed was in fact a crystal ball. He used it to ask whether there would be free Doritos at work that day. He then proceeds to throw the globe at the vending machine, thus smashing the glass and fulfilling his prediction. It all ends well

for him. When the guy's colleague tries to see if he will get a promotion at work, he ends up throwing the globe and hitting his boss in a particular area, ensuring he won't be getting a promotion.

### Rebecca Medel

Terry Tate tackling nerdy office workers from 2003 is my favourite Super Bowl ad. It's a Reebok commercial, but all I remember is a guy playing solitaire on his computer, winning, standing up and doing a little cheer, followed by wham! Totally plowed into by Tate who comes flying out of nowhere. I still laugh every time I watch it online. People getting tackled is so funny. Kind of makes me think about who I'd tackle if I had my own portable linebacker. Slow walkers, creepy guys and of course anyone doing any kind of victory dance anywhere and for any reason.

### Matt Hirji

In 2005, Fed-Ex Kinkos let the cat out of the bag. With their illustrious Super Bowl advertisement they quantifiably declared that there are exactly 10 elements that make a commercial on the first Sunday in February a valiant victory.

The strangest thing about these commercials is that it's strangely accurate. I do love when celebrities appear in commercials. I do love it when an adorable yet menacing animal kicks that celebrity in the groin. And I love it even more when that groin kick is dubbed with Journey's famous power-pop jam "Don't Stop Believing" playing in the background.

Oh dear God, they've done it! They've actually created a something that appeals to every ounce of my manly/childish/irreverent/music-loving/animal-loving rai-son-d'etre.

### Jonathan Faerber

In my pre-couch surfing, Tim Hortons' eating days, I used to be ripped like Tony Horton. Well, okay, so I was a relatively skinny kid. But somewhere along the way something went wrong and I blame it all on Doritos for making junk food look irresistible — even cool. For the few that aren't aware, Doritos has a long and proud tradition of creating fantastic Super Bowl ads, thereby encouraging unhealthy addictions worldwide.

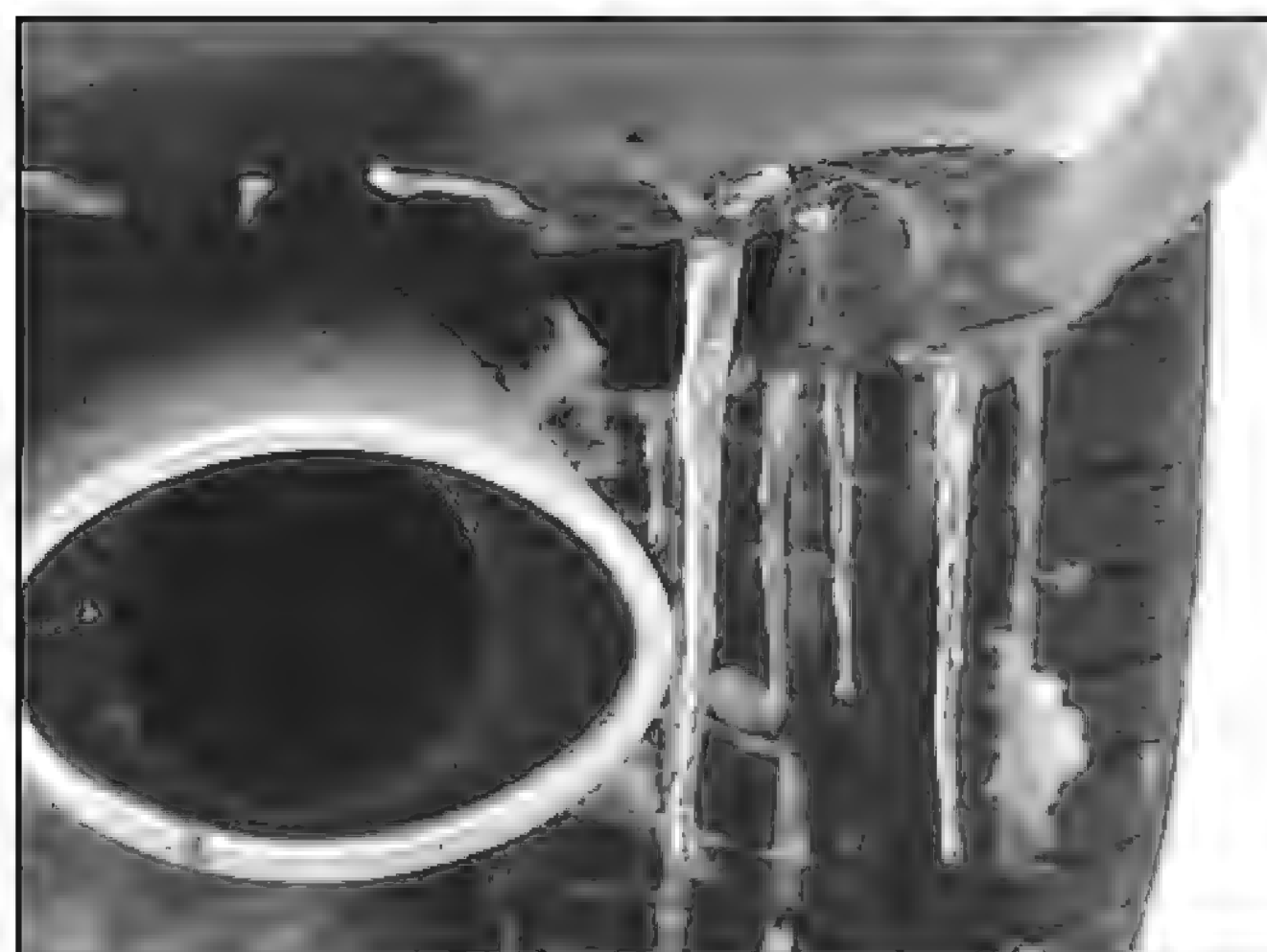
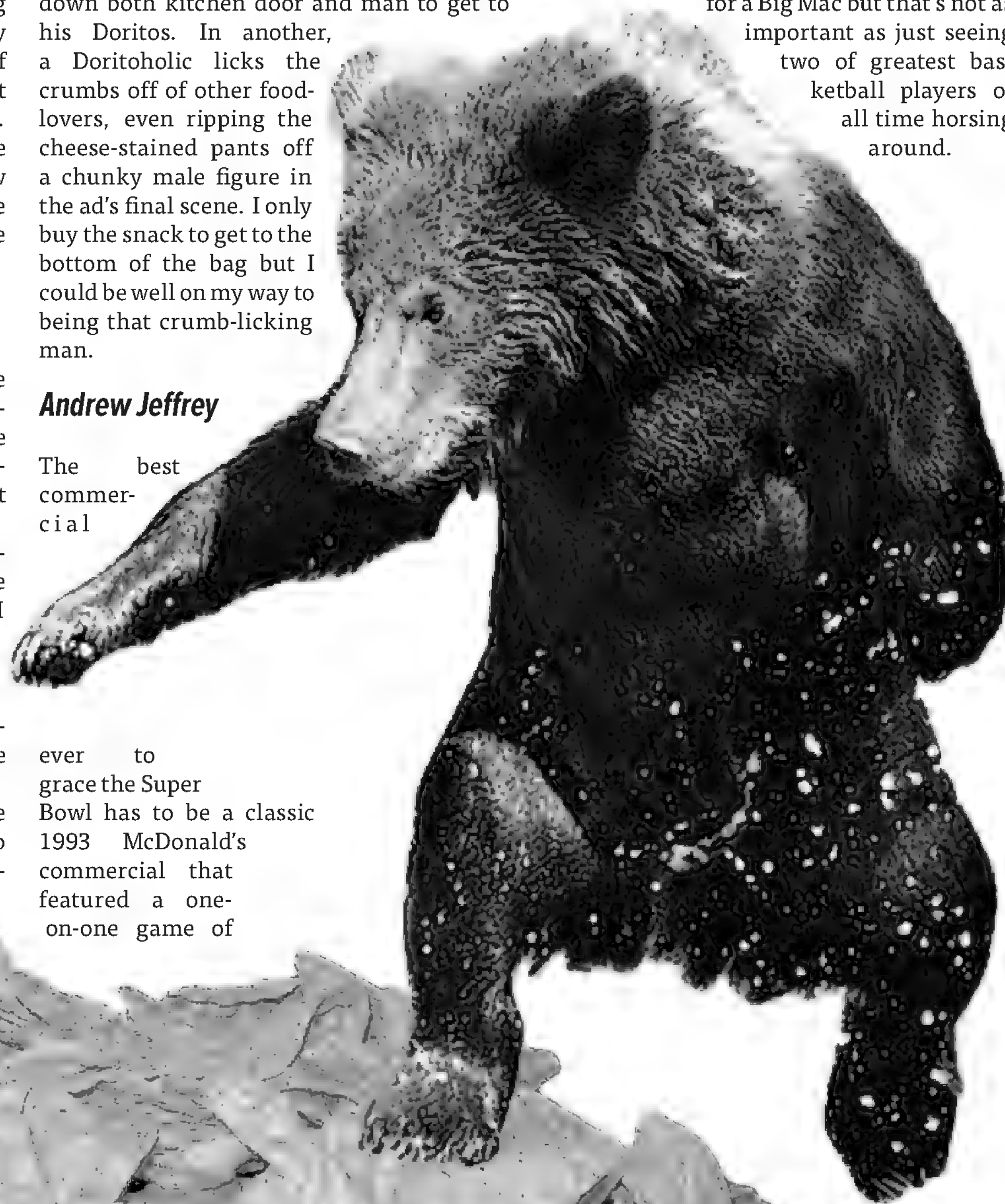
Last year an overweight pug bowled down both kitchen door and man to get to his Doritos. In another, a Doritoholic licks the crumbs off of other food-lovers, even ripping the cheese-stained pants off a chunky male figure in the ad's final scene. I only buy the snack to get to the bottom of the bag but I could be well on my way to being that crumb-licking man.

### Andrew Jeffrey

The best commercial

ever to grace the Super Bowl has to be a classic 1993 McDonald's commercial that featured a one-on-one game of

H-O-R-S-E between Michael Jordan and Larry Bird. The winner gets to eat the coveted prize of a Big Mac and the loser has to watch. The shots get progressively more outrageous coming from the stands, rafters and even outside the building but always ending in "nothing but net". What's so great about this commercial isn't just the sheer entertainment value of Bird and Jordan's game or the intriguing "What If?" scenario of the two playing each other. It's how well the commercial works despite only loosely relating to the product it's selling. Yes, the two are playing for a Big Mac but that's not as important as just seeing two of greatest basketball players of all time horsing around.



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# funny TOWN

Darcy Ropchan takes a look at Edmonton's comedy scene

Photos by Sam Brooks

*"It's some of the most exhilarating fun you could ever have."*

— Matt Lisac

It's Monday night and the room is more than three-quarters empty. The walls are adorned with signed pictures of famous comedians who have packed the house. But on this night the laughs are few and far between and the audience shifts uncomfortably in their seats after each of one of Matt Lisac's punch lines. But it's not for lack of humour on his part, or any of the other comic's that were on before him.

"This is a good number tonight," says Lisac, referring to the number of audience members in attendance. "Usually we get about 20 people. And everyone is pretty spread out, so nobody feels comfortable laughing."

Lisac is performing at open mic night at The Comic Strip. Tucked between two chain restaurants in the middle of Bourbon Street in West Edmonton Mall, the comedy club is anything but a hidden gem.

Just like all the comics before him, Lisac barrels through a five minute set full of witty observations about his life. All comics are prodded off stage by a red light that indicates when their time is up. Some jokes get a response; others don't. It doesn't bother Lisac — it's the nature of the craft.



"When you start out, you don't get a lot of laughs, so after a year of not getting a lot of laughs, you're just desperate for people to like you so it's hard to stick with a bit where the audience clearly doesn't like it."

Edmonton might not be the premiere name on the comedy circuit. The frozen heart of Oil Country is the festival city, but metropolises like Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver tend to get the spotlight when it comes comedy on the international stage. But if you ask the comedians who are currently working the circuit, and if you know where to look, it'll become obvious that Edmonton is one of the most vibrant cities in Canada for the comedic arts.

"I'd say that Edmonton's comedy scene is one of the better ones, definitely in the prairies, honestly in the country," says Rapid Fire Theater artistic director Amy Shostak.

Rapid Fire has been a fixture on the Edmonton comedy scene for 31 years. Launched in 1981, the company has been the premiere destination for theatresports and improvisational comedy in Edmonton, and is home to the largest Improv festival in Canada: Improvaganza. This company has helped catapult local comedians into stardom, like Nathan Fillion, Ron Pederson and Josh Dean.

Shostak laments that the lure of cities like Toronto sweep away some of Rapid Fire's most talented improvisers. But while some may see competing with big cities as a challenge, Shostak sees as an advantage. As opposed to Toronto, where there are countless improv companies, Rapid Fire is one of the few places in town to perform improv.





It allows their performers to innovate and share their ideas from inside the company, eliminating the urge for them to branch out independently. This constant creative evolution is what keeps Rapid Fire fresh, funny and entertaining for audiences.

Although improv may be what Edmonton is known for in the comedy world, it's far from the only game in town. It shares the stage with a rich stand-up comedy scene that has an array of performers and no shortage of venues for people to get up on stage and work out their material.

"You could pretty much go anywhere, any day of the week and find a mic to perform on," says local comedian Mike Anderson. "Stand-up is tricky. To the layman it may look easy — just get up on stage and fire jokes at the audience for five minutes and hope you get some laughs. But the job is much deeper."

The level of dedication and tolerance to rejection that a comedian needs to survive in that world is astounding. Most stand-ups will tell you that you're almost guaranteed to not get any laughs or even be any good on your first time out. The professionals that work the scene today make it seem effortless to perform, but they didn't get to where they are now without bombing at least a few times.

As Anderson sees it, Edmonton is one of the most hospitable cities in Canada to make a start for aspiring comedians to make a start. There's a multitude of open mic nights in Edmonton for someone to get their feet wet. The thrill of being on stage was exhilarating for Anderson and it's that thrill that keeps him and other comedians coming back to the stage, even if they receive a less than favourable reception.

"It was once I stepped out on my own and took risks onstage that I really fell in love with

performing," recalls Lawrence Fehler, another regular on Edmonton's comedy circuit. "My first year of comedy I had a bad set in front of about 11 people and it crushed me and I didn't perform for about six months."

It's the ability to get back up on the stage after having a bad reception that defines what a good comedian is. In the end, the worst thing that can happen is that you bomb on stage, but everyone has told a joke that gets a dead-eyed response at some point in their life. As Lisac advises, bombing is really not as bad as it looks, and after a while, you learn to embrace the feeling. In the long run, it builds character and will help make you a better comedian.

**"Stand-up is tricky. To the layman it may look easy — just get up on stage and fire jokes at the audience for five minutes and hope you get some laughs. But the job is much deeper."**

— Mike Anderson

Lisac believes that stand-up is an entrepreneurial art form. The success and quality of your act is dependent on the amount of time, dedication, and work you're willing to put in to it. The scene is what you make of it. But everyone has their own idea of what success in comedy is.

Success to some may be a starring role on movies or television, or the occasional guest spot. But the majority of local working comedians would be happy to just make a living doing what they love and do best.

"It would be nice to have a career. But where I am now, I define that as success. Just being

able to go up there and entertain people. I'm a carpenter and I have a daughter, so I have to pay the bills first," says Anderson.

"For me it would be to perform comedy as a full-time job and pay all my bills with funds I make performing and travelling," says Fehler. "It seems like some of my favourite Edmonton comics have moved to more major cities. But there are a few full-time comics who still live here and make a decent living in comedy."

On the surface, the comedians working the scene in Edmonton may seem like a close-knit group. But like any other job, there are professional problems. The comedy world is no stranger to the kind of drama and office

hard when you're first starting out in comedy, people just won't actually take you seriously until they see you out there enough," Anderson says.

Fehler adds that working with other comics in Edmonton can be a bit juvenile.

"There seems to be a lot of dissension amongst a few of the comics; just a lot of back-stabbing and bullshit that people like to spread in order to boost their own ego. It's like high school. It's weird how some of the oldest, 'wisest' ones are some of the worst for the behind the back talking."

But this negative aspect is only a small part of the scene. Most comics have nothing but positive things to say about performing in Edmonton. It doesn't matter whether or not you're an improviser or a stand-up comic. The two can go hand in hand.

Shostak from Rapid Fire Theatre is quick to agree that although the art forms are different in some fundamental ways, the two actually are closer than people think. In order for a comic to be able react and adjust their act to the response that the audience is giving them, they must be good improvisers.

"There's kind of this weird chasm between stand-up and improv where improvisers think stand-ups are too involved in themselves and stand-ups think improvisers are lazy. But I think in the last few years the communities have started to mix together a bit more."

Regardless of what art form you work in, comedy is alive and well in Edmonton and finding a stage to perform can be as simple as looking around the corner. Lisac advises that if you've even given half a thought of trying stand-up, you should go out and seek an open mic.

"It's some of the most exhilarating fun you could ever have."



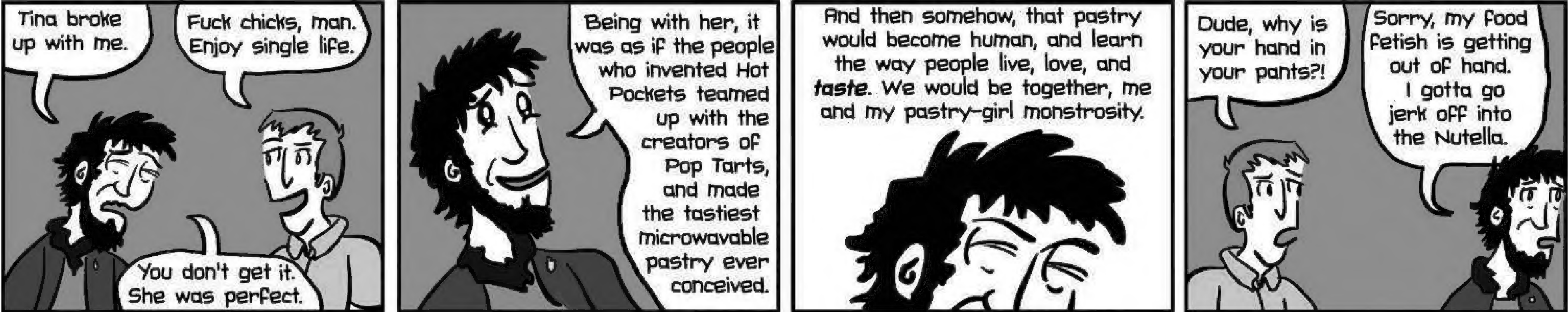


# Diversions

**Design & Production Editor**  
Ross Vincent  
**Phone**  
780.492.6663  
**Email**  
production@gateway.ualberta.ca  
**Volunteer**  
Comics meetings Mondays at 5 p.m. in 3-04 SUB. C'mon by!

COMICS

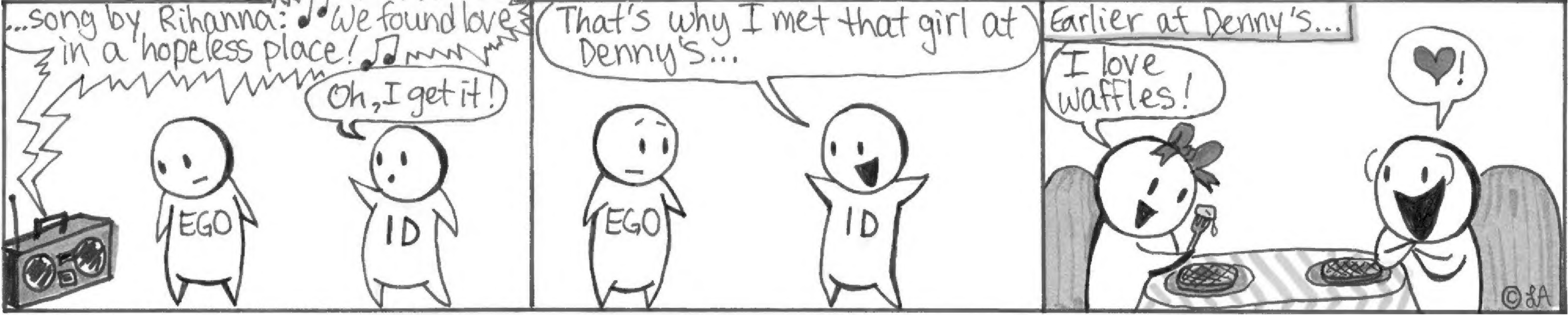
POP & ICE CREAM by Lance and Evan Mudryk



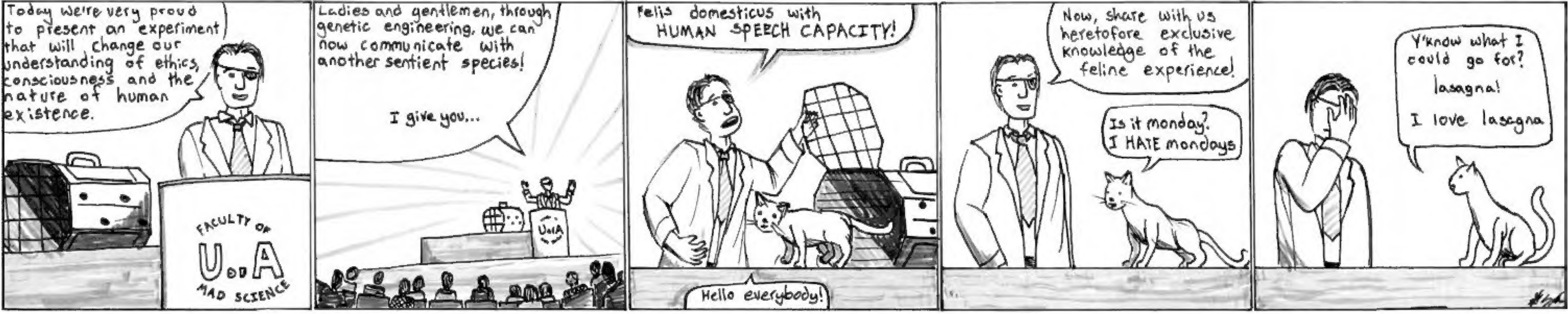
METALEETO by Ross Vincent



ID & EGO by Lauren Alston



CHEAP CYNICISM by Jesse Cunningham



PANEL SHOW by Ross Vincent





crossword

Puzzle provided by BestCrosswords.com  
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Across

- 1. Killer whales
- 6. Metal fastener
- 11. French possessive
- 14. Key letter
- 15. El Greco's birthplace
- 16. Mil. rank
- 17. Scorn
- 18. Way to cook
- 19. 401(k) alternative
- 20. Arab sailing vessel
- 22. Actress Sophia
- 24. Proud
- 28. Zigzag
- 30. Small lobe
- 31. Rise to one's feet
- 32. O. Henry device
- 33. Form of backgammon
- 37. \_\_\_ de mer
- 38. Green \_\_\_ is the place to be
- 39. Athletic supporter?
- 40. Engagement
- 43. Property claims
- 45. Seraglio
- 46. Last car?
- 47. Musical dramas
- 49. Newspapers
- 50. Bailiwicks
- 51. New Mexico art colony
- 52. Conditions

- 53. Feudal estate
- 56. Band together
- 61. Albanian coin
- 62. Old-womanish
- 63. Gum
- 64. Non-dairy milk
- 65. Calls for
- 66. Community character

Down

- 1. Approves
- 2. Blame
- 3. PC core
- 4. Calendar abbr.
- 5. Bloodsucking insect
- 6. Young haddock
- 7. Black bird
- 8. "Michael Collins" actor
- 9. Aliens, briefly
- 10. Marsh
- 11. Hubert's successor
- 12. Violinist Zimbalist
- 13. Examine, search
- 21. Tee follower
- 23. Shoppe adjective
- 24. Ascend
- 25. Goddesses of the seasons
- 26. Letter-shaped fastener
- 27. Amusement
- 28. Alloy of iron and carbon
- 29. Puts down
- 31. Beat it!
- 33. Flu symptoms

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9	10		11	12	13
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64					65						66			

- 34. Wombs
- 35. Perfume the air
- 36. Affirmatives
- 38. Gillette brand
- 41. Greek fertility goddess, flightless bird
- 42. Person who rows

- 43. Unhurried ease
- 44. Proverb ending?
- 46. Monetary unit of Vietnam
- 47. Monteverdi opera
- 48. Annoying
- 49. Challenges
- 50. Has a bug

- 51. Related
- 54. "Wheel of Fortune" buy
- 55. Never, in Nuremberg
- 57. After taxes
- 58. Language suffix
- 59. Juan's uncle
- 60. Dash lengths

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sudoku

		7	9					
	3				7	8		2
	6			3			1	
		8	6				9	
			5	8	3			
	5				9	2		
	8			1			7	
6		4	3				5	
					6	1		

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student  
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### *TUESDAY* WING NIGHT

\$5 Public Wings

### *WEDNESDAY* PINT NIGHT

\$3 Feature Pint  
\$4 House Pints  
\$5 Domestic Pints  
\$6 Import & Premium Pints

### *THURSDAY* WINE NIGHT

\$4 Wine

### *FRIDAY & SATURDAY*

Featuring DJ Fusion

### HAPPY HOUR(S)

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